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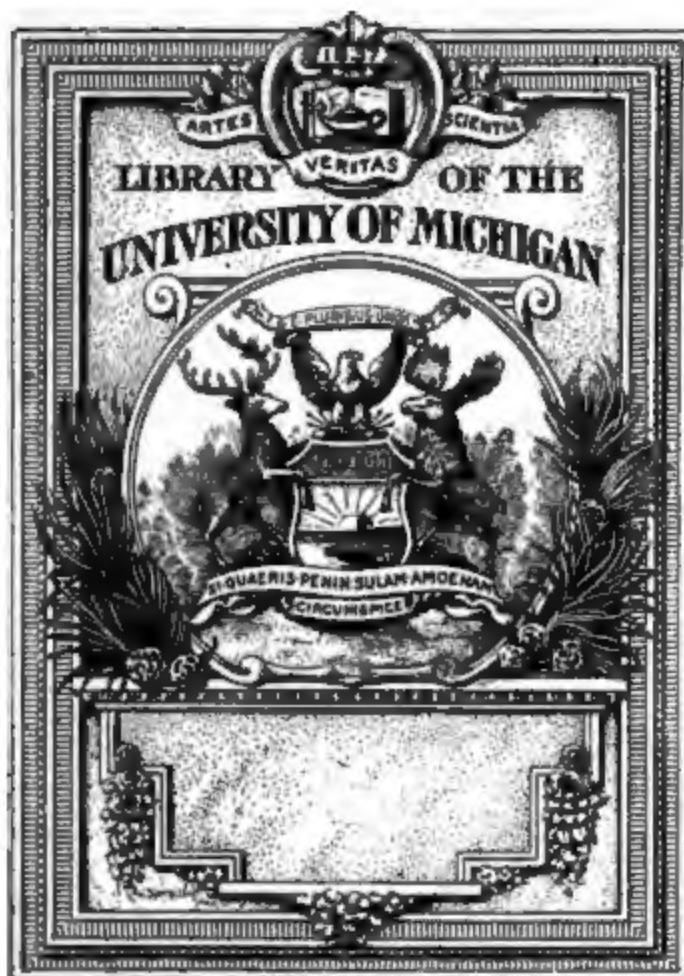
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RECORDS AND
REMINISCENCES
BY SIR FRANCIS C.
BURNAND



822.8

B942



The Punchiboss

or
EphseeBee



E.T.R.

This humorous little Creature has a most comical brain — full of happy thoughts. He settles on everything directly you put it in front of him. He is awfull kind to children so he gives me great encouragement when I do my pictures nice enough which is allmost allways now. He does buzz round you though and prod you up. He likes to get a good run or the boards sometimes. He has a willful little way of knocking off a piece if it comes in his way & he is very strong in the wings. He has got a awfull clever lot of drawers and critters together — all of them penkusses and types of English benty. (I must get this put in sometime when he is away — he might not like me to berlesk him after his politeness and forethought in letting me beggin so young.)

ONE OF E. T. REED'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO NATURAL HISTORY

**RECORDS AND
REMINISCENCES
PERSONAL AND GENERAL**

BY

SIR FRANCIS C. BURNAND

VOL. II

**WITH NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS AND
FACSIMILE LETTERS**

**METHUEN & CO.
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CHAPTER XX

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IT was not long before I was invited to the Wednesday *Punch* dinner. Whether my first introduction to the majority of the staff was at a weekly dinner in Bouverie Street, or on the occasion of an “outing” at Dulwich, I am not certain. I fancy that my first *Punch* dinner was in Bouverie Street, and why I am fairly sure of this fact is

because Mr. Bradbury, sen., grandfather of Laurence Bradbury, the present partner in the firm, deferred his departure from the office on purpose to unite with Mr. Evans in welcoming me on my first appearance as "one of Mr. Punch's young men." I remember so well his geniality and his expression of regret that the state of his health rendered him unable to remain for dinner. But *the* dinner, which if not the first in order, was to me the memorable one, was held at an hotel at Dulwich, not far from the railway station. It was here that I was introduced to Thackeray. At that dinner the entire staff was present. "Pater" Evans was at one end of the table, and Mark Lemon was at the other. Which was chairman and which was "vice" I have not the smallest idea. There was no formality. Mark was jovial, I seldom saw him otherwise; certainly never at a *Punch* dinner. Shirley Brooks was ever on the *qui vive* for a repartee, Horace Mayhew being as a rule his butt. Then there were John Leech, John Tenniel, Henry Silver, Percival Leigh, Charles Keene, Tom Taylor, and Thackeray. I am pretty sure that I sat next to Charles Keene, and he spoke to me of the "story of the herring," which he had illustrated in *Once a Week*. There were no toasts, and there was not on that occasion any discussion of the cartoon of the week, as I fancy the business of the evening had been previously settled by Shirley and Mark together. Anyway

Thackeray, as I remember, had to leave early, and after bidding them all good-night with a comprehensive wave of the hand, he paused by my chair, put out his hand, and, as I rose from my seat, shook mine most cordially. Then releasing it, he placed his right hand on my shoulder, and, as it were, introduced me to the assemblage, saying, "Gentlemen, allow the old boy to present to you 'the new boy,' and I wish him every success. He's sure of it." Whereat his short speech was loudly acclaimed, my health was drunk informally, I was not required to respond, and with another hearty shake of the hand, Thackeray quitted the room, turning once to nod encouragingly at me and to wave his adieux to the others.

That was to me a memorable night.

Frequently in my early *Punch* days had we in the summer-time to have our Wednesday dinners out of town. In after years the custom was gradually dropped.

On another occasion I remember Thackeray driving down, to Richmond or Dulwich, in his carriage. After dinner—he stayed late—he asked Percival Leigh ("the old Professor") if he should give him a lift home; and the Professor accepted. Mark Lemon informed me afterwards that Thackeray had been immensely amused by the Professor on alighting taking out his purse and asking Thackeray how much he was indebted to him, as he insisted on paying his share of the trap!

He had no idea, it seems, that Thackeray had made so much money as enabled him to keep his own carriage. Thackeray replied that "he would let him know when the bill came in," and so the Professor, under the impression that Thackeray hired his carriage for occasional outings, consented to defer his contribution until the livery-stable keeper should send in his account. Charles Keene and the Professor were true, natural, Bohemians, and that any literary man, or artist, should possess a carriage, or a liveried servant, or a riding horse, seemed to both of them quite contrary to all the best traditions and unwritten laws of Bohemia. A stout stick, thick boots, overcoat, and wallet, these were all the outfit necessary in Charles Keene's or Percival Leigh's opinion for a "brother brush" or brother penman, with an occasional ride on a 'bus.

The weekly *Punch* dinners of the *Punch* cabinet council were held then as now every Wednesday, in the largest room of the office, which was, at that time, lower down Bouverie Street than it is now, just at the second turning going down from Fleet Street on the right-hand side, where there was a dingy-looking little door opening on to a narrow staircase which Mark Lemon, broad-bodied as he was large-minded, found rather difficult to mount without screwing himself a trifle on one side, and which Professor Leigh and Pony Mayhew, on

certain exceptional occasions when the convivial sitting, after business was finished, had been very late and more convivial than usual, found it remarkably difficult to descend without exercising the greatest possible caution. For whereas Mark Lemon, by dint of screwing himself a bit sideways, could ascend and descend with comparative facility, this pair of our “oldest contributors” could have descended with the greatest ease if they had not already thoroughly “screwed themselves” before quitting, with uncertain footsteps, their places at the festive board. “Croppes” were not by any means the rule, but an exceptional one I do remember, when the learned Professor, having mistaken the first step for a continuation of the landing, by a *facilis descensus* was projected on to Mayhew three steps down in advance of him, and both landed on the mat in perfect safety, shook hands, and parted at the door, which was held open for them by one Waller, who was a sort of Trinculo on the establishment, in the service of Bradbury & Evans. Professor and Pony went their different ways, and it was supposed that each arrived in due course at his own “haven of rest where he would be” before the end of the week. At all events they were both safe and sound and at the table on the following Wednesday. At these weekly *concilia*, when everyone was present, with invariably one of the proprietors as representing “the Firm” (in my time it was

always "Pater Evans" as "Vice"), Mark Lemon was invariably chairman. Here was the grave, kindly, humorous, and inimitable caricaturist, John Leech, who faced Thackeray at the vice-chairman's end of the table; then Horace Mayhew (known as "Pony"), Henry Silver, Percival Leigh (known as "The Professor"), Tom Taylor (with whose plays I was well acquainted), quick spoken and fidgety; the brilliant Shirley Brooks faced Percival Leigh, who sat on the chairman's left, while I was placed next to Leigh, with Charles Keene as my left-hand neighbour. To this party were, occasionally, admitted Sir Joseph Paxton, of Crystal Palace renown, and a tall, handsome friend of the Firm's, and of the staff, one Mr. Noaks or Nokes, as well as Sam Lucas and Edward Walford, respectively editor and sub-editor of *Once a Week*, then being published by Bradbury & Evans. These four—Paxton, Noaks, Lucas, and Walford—were the only outsiders I ever remember at the *Punch* dinner. The two first not infrequently dropped in on a Wednesday as long as *Once a Week* lasted; after its collapse, they dropped out. Paxton was a *persona grata* with Messrs. Bradbury & Evans, as was also Noaks [or Nokes], though how they came to be so, I was never informed, or if I was informed I have forgotten. There was yet another who had been admitted to these dinners, a gentleman named Peter Wrackham. I heard about him, but before my time

he had ceased to dine at "the table." He may have (by then) ceased to dine at any table. He had existed; but never have I been able to glean the slightest information concerning him. From Sir John Tenniel or from Mr. Henry Silver in reply to my inquiry as to "who *was* Peter Wrackham?" I have been invariably "countered" with a shake of the head, a knowing smile, and, by way of reply, the meditative observation, "Ah! Old Peter Wrackham! Ah!—yes—he was a friend of "the Firm's." Only this and nothing more. So, long ago, I renounced all attempts at elucidating the truth, and now content myself with considering the subject as a kind of sensational heading to a story, *The Mystery of Peter Wrackham.*

These "guests"—as the "supers" used to be described in the programme of a play—did not presume on their privilege, and not one of the four ever took part in the discussions as to the subject of the next week's cartoon. In fact, I am almost sure that they left almost as soon as the discussion began, Noaks [or Nokes] being the only one I ever remember remaining. Though at this time (1863) Thackeray had ceased to contribute regularly (he did occasionally), yet he was fairly regular in his attendance at the dinner, and took his share in the political discussions, invariably commencing with a sort of apology, describing himself as one not having present authority, but as "one of the past scribes." Tom Taylor was all-

impatience, and his arguments were of the sledge-hammer order. Pony Mayhew was comparatively silent except when slyly referred to by Shirley Brooks for his opinion as a professing Red Republican. A handsome man of pronounced Hebrew type was Horace Mayhew, with long white hair and heavy white moustache. He usually wore a mulberry-coloured frock-coat with velvet collar and cuffs, a shirt frill, low waistcoat, diamond pin, fawn-coloured "pants" (as they were termed in Albert Smithian days), and bright varnished boots. He still imitated the "D'Orsay" style, and wore straps to his "pants," which fitted closely over the boot. A silver-knobbed cane, and a hat of which the brim was very broad, much curled up at the sides, and narrow at the crown, completed, with light gloves, his invariable equipment. He was seldom without a cigar, and I never remember to have seen him indulge, as did Mark and others, in the homely "yard of clay." His sobriquet was "The Wicked Marquis," and as a bachelor for the greater part of his life, he was the only one of the party who thoroughly represented "the man about town." Shirley Brooks always used chaffingly to insist that Pony's age was something incalculable; that he was, in all probability, "the Wandering Jew" himself, and that at all events he had been mentioned by Shakespeare in that line in *King Lear*—

"‘Modo’ they call him, or ‘Mahu.’"



SHIRLEY BROOKS

Horace held Shirley's sharp-tongued wit in great esteem, and only met his chaff with notes of admiration. Mayhew married quite late in life; but this was in keeping with his character, as he was always late; he got up late, breakfasted late, supped late, went to bed late, and married late. But, poor Horace Mayhew, there was one exception to the rule, he died comparatively early.

In those days there was port and sherry after dinner, and, I think, at dinner too; for I do not recall the presence of champagne as a regular beverage. Coffee after dinner was a very much later introduction; but I remember that at dessert tea was served during some interval in the debate. By the time Shirley Brooks came to occupy the editorial chair we, having gradually dropped port and sherry, were taking to light claret and champagne; and coffee came in with the cigars. In Mark's time, spirit-drinking followed on the wine; nearly all were smokers, mostly of cigars, but "Jackides" (Sir John Tenniel) always showed a partiality for a long clay pipe ("Brosely," I think, they are called), which, when he had "marked it for his own" by drawing his initials on it most artistically, was carefully preserved for him from week to week.

John Leech was always reserved. I remember his thanking me heartily for an article I had written on "street noises and cries" at "a quiet watering-place." He illustrated it, showing a humanised prawn bawling

“Fine Pra-a-arns, this marnin’!” Ordinarily he did not appear interested in politics; but when he did offer a suggestion, it went direct to the point. Charles Keene was not a great conversationalist, but on the rare occasions when, late in the sitting (I am now speaking of the time after that of Leech and Thackeray), puffing his little black clay pipe, he felt inspired to explain to us the meaning of certain quiet chuckles in which he had been indulging all to himself without any ostensible incitement thereto, he was simply inimitable; and, as to mirth-provoking, I, with the others, have laughed, cried with laughing indeed, more at one of his labyrinthian anecdotes, the point of which from beginning to end remained an impenetrable mystery to the company, than at the finest and wittiest effort of the most accomplished *raconteur*. Shirley for epigram and witty comments, Mark Lemon for humorous and dramatic narration; but it was not until Mark and Shirley had passed away that Charles Keene burst upon us as an inimitable humorist in the muddle-headed-story-telling line. He smoked what he called “dotlets,” which seemed to me to be scrapings of the very strongest tobacco compressed into pipes of the time of Charles II., fished out of the river Thames; or if not the genuine article, a very good, and, of course, as a pipe, a “colourable,” imitation of it. Except for volunteering and an occasional look in at the Arts Club (then in Hanover Square), he was a kind of hermit

artist, living in a style that suited him, but which I should say could never, by any possibility whatever, have suited anybody else.

Charles Keene used to be supplied by some joke-purveyor with little memorandum books full of coloured sketches (years after my first joining he showed me several of them) roughly illustrating jokes which were to supply him with material. The consequence of this was that, as Keene drew much from his own immediate observation, this collection of jokes became stale, and many of them had been repeated on 'change (the great "joke mart") and in clubs before Charles made selections from the stock, for which, I believe, he regularly paid the purveyor. When I first met Charles Keene in the old days at young Buckstone's and Mat Morgan's studio, with Millais, Prinsep, Leighton, Marks, Stone, "Dolly" Storey, and *toute la boutique artistique* of that period, he was very different from the Charles Keene of the later days. Perhaps he overtaxed his physical strength, and did not take in enough fuel to keep the engine-fires going.

I must not omit the only night that I ever saw Thackeray lose his temper; and he did, with a vengeance. The discussion was over—it was in the dining-room in the old office at Bouverie Street—and Thackeray had moved into an ancient arm-chair a little away from the table, but practically between Mark Lemon and myself. Mark was enjoy-

ing the after-dinner cigar as he sat back, spread out, as it were, on his large high-backed chair; Horace Mayhew was in his usual place, as were one or two others. Shirley Brooks had left earlier in the evening. "Kettle began it"—that is some irresponsible person (Horace Mayhew probably) dragged in the name of Edmund Yates, and immediately Mark tried (why, I did not then comprehend) to turn the conversation, but to no purpose. Thackeray frowningly asked a question; somebody replied. Another question, Thackeray becoming hotter. Mark attempted to throw oil on the troubled waters, which would have been effective had they been only waters. But, as it was, he threw the oil on smouldering fire, and—phew!—what a blaze!! Down came Thackeray's fist like a sledge-hammer on the arm of the chair, as, in quite unmeasured terms, he denounced the man who had written of him in a Sunday paper, describing him as "a broken-nosed satirist." Then after this lightning flash and peal of thunder, which made even Mark Lemon quiver, there came a pause. It was the pause after Virgil's "*Quos Ego*"—and Thackeray, without another word, rose quickly, left the room, and the house.

Then Mark told me the story about Edmund Yates, Thackeray, Dickens, and the Garrick Club, and I was sorry for every one mixed up in that affair, especially for Thackeray, who, I rather fancy, was not absolutely satisfied with the line he had taken,

although he could not subsequently retract. *Tantæne celestibus iræ!* The whole story is to be found, an *ex parte* statement of course, in the autobiography of Edmund Yates, and I daresay in some other “reminiscences.” My notion of it, in my Gospel “according to Mark,” is that Edmund Yates was wrong to begin with, that Thackeray was wrong to go on with, and that Charles Dickens acted impulsively and rather more hastily than he would otherwise have done, had it been against anyone except Thackeray. To paraphrase Mr. Mantillini’s summing up, “None were right and all were wrong, upon my life and soul, O demmit!”

.

What a difference between the office in those days on a Saturday afternoon and now! *Then* (1864 and for several years) Mark Lemon, Shirley, and “Pater” were “at home,” so to speak, to all-comers, after Mark, having “passed the proofs,” was ready and willing to pass the bottle, or rather to stop it. Work done, “*nunc est bibendum*” was the rule,—*et fumandum*, for the cigar-box was open to all-comers *ad libitum* and *ad lipitum*. “Corrections” in proofs were then possible up to, and inclusive of, Monday morning. *On a changé tout cela*, and, it may be added, undoubtedly for the better, as nowadays business is “strictly” business; the size of the number is doubled; circulation more than trebled; work quadrupled. We have forsaken sack; those

who might take to it again would get it, in another sense, from the austere editor, supported by the inexorable proprietors. Work occupies every department throughout the week, and holidays only intensify it. In fact a radical change.

The mention of these bygone Saturday afternoons recalls to my mind the figure of "the old Professor," Percival Leigh, who having been a medical student with John Leech, had assisted Leech in many difficulties; for did not the artist in early days, when in a somewhat similar situation to Thackeray's Captain Shandon in the Fleet,—only that Leech did not get farther than temporary retirement in Cursitor Street,—draw sketches which the friendly Professor sold for him in Fleet Street, returning with the cash to the caged bird, who was forthwith released? Why, certainly. And for these good offices John Leech and Percival Leigh, author of *The Comic Latin Grammar*, were ever on the best of terms, since both of them came on to the staff at about the same time. The Professor had many queer fads. He belonged to a generation long past, and with his odd figure, handsome face, but head much too large for his body, would have found an appropriate place in Smollett's *Peregrine Pickle*, or would have fitted in sympathetically with the company at Shandy Hall, and might easily have identified himself with Mr. Shandy when arguing with Dr. Slop. Often and



John Leech

JOHN LEECH

•A 90 U

often, in the course of a long political discussion, when the Professor, after raising his voice, and shrilly piping to those who had no ear for his music, would collapse, utterly exhausted by the force of his own arguments, have I been reminded of the old story of the Irish juryman, who, standing out for “Not Guilty” against all the others, testily observed “that of all the pig-headed, obstinate men he’d ever met they were the pig-headedest!” The Professor’s arguments, like “the driver’s curse,” “unheeded swelled the air”; the decision was arrived at without further reference to his suggestions, and he solaced himself with cigars and mixed drink. The Professor delighted in mysticism and Swedenborgianism; not that he was a mystic or a Swedenborgian, but he loved to admit three parts of any religious, or philosophic, system, for the sake of attacking the fourth part. He would tell you wonderful ghost stories on the very first authority, admit the credibility of them, and then fall foul of the supernatural. To the last he retained his sense of humour, but gradually lost such faculty as he had possessed of expressing it in writing. Long ago his wit had bubbled over and pretty well exhausted itself in *The Comic Latin Grammar*, a great favourite with the boys at my second school, and one quotation from it at least was popular with my tutor, Gifford Cookesley, at Eton, namely:—

“When Dido saw Æneas would not come
She wept in silence and was Di Do Dum.”

The Professor in early times was a natty hand at a paragraph, but this faculty deserted him, and he could only write paragraphs in an involved kind of Fielding and Smollett style with the point of his "obserwashuns" secreted somewhere among the verbiage. Unlike Mark, he was totally unable to go with the times. Mark was always, somehow or another, "*dans le mouvement*," and in this respect ahead even of Shirley Brooks. Shirley was naturally a brilliant idler compelled to work, and when he did take up his pen and, literally, "polish off" an article, he could put more of the very best into one hour's work, off-hand, than others could do by correcting and working up the article they could never have "knocked off" as Shirley used to do.

Percival Leigh was a herbalist and had curious theories about edible roots, which he would go about collecting in Richmond Park, and, bringing them home to Hammersmith, he would cook them and try experiments with them on his own palate and digestion. He attained to considerable experience in this line, having been a perfect "martyr to the steak," when experimented upon in connection with all sorts of *fungi* whereof he was the first discoverer. Fortunately knowledge of medicine outweighed his mere acquaintance with these poisonous edibles, and so the risk was minimised. To the very last he loved to dine at midday on a steak cooked, as far as I could make out, in *asa-*



CHARLES KEENE

Dear M'

fætida. It was not to be wondered at, that, in his wanderings about London with his wallet, purchasing such provender, as had a far-reaching odour, he was, pre-eminently, a lonely man. He reminded me of the traveller who “fell among thieves,” for his friends and acquaintances, seeing him afar off, would carefully pass over to the other side. Barring this distinctive eccentricity, he was the dearest, kindest old boy, and a thorough gentleman in the truest and widest sense of that much misapplied distinction.

Once started on *Punch*, it was not long ere I resumed a sort of dramatic form of criticising new pieces which I had some time before commenced in *Fun*. Thence to a serial was a short step. The serial was “How, When, and Where?” into the spirit of which Charles Keene entered *con amore*, doing for it some of his very best humorous work. This was work that, as I learned afterwards, he thoroughly enjoyed. Indeed, his pictures convey that notion. His commendation of a collaborateur and an author was always grudgingly given.

Settling down into a position as something of a dramatist and more of a burlesque writer, much in request for the stage, as by this time (between 1862 and 1865) I had written for most of the principal theatres, having made the fortune of the little Royalty in Soho with *Ixion* produced under the management of Mrs. Charles Selby, which led to my being permanently engaged on that establishment;

being also on the staff of *Punch*, it was not surprising that a good-natured uncle of mine, George Bishop (who had married Clara Cowley, my mother's youngest sister), residing at Meadowbank (Twickenham side of the river, very nearly opposite the Duke of Buccleuch's), of whom my wife and I saw a great deal during our residence at Richmond, should have suggested my becoming a member of the Garrick Club, to which he (in no sort of way connected with literature or art) had belonged for some years. So at his instance I had myself "put up," and in 1865 was elected. I was, subsequently to this, a member of the St. James's, then in St. James's Street, a delightful club, unique in its way, now located in Piccadilly, and of others, including the Oriental, a very late and remarkably eccentric club, which, once situated in Waterloo Place, has long since vanished from the map of clubland.

In those early days at the Garrick (1865), with Arthur Sullivan, Frederick Clay, Harry Weldon, Captain Hawley Smart the novelist, and one or two others, we could, indeed, have adapted the chorus of a once popular song and chanted together—

“We are a merry family,
We are ! We are ! We are !”

And so we were. Our hearty laughter, as we pretty regularly dined together, brought down upon us the thunder of Sir Charles Taylor, the Jupiter Tonans of the club, in the shape of a severe message, delivered

to us by Farman, the steward, a hard, stolid man, considered rather as "a creature" of Sir Charles's, then the head servant of the club. Most of our fellow-members and seniors were inclined to sympathise with us, Sir Charles being looked upon as rather an autocrat, and therefore not generally popular. However, as "Goody" in the opera of *Midas* was requested "to moderate the rancour of her tongue," so we, being peremptorily required to tone down our merriment, complied: we "ate the leek, and eke" we used strong, but not loud, language concerning our tyrannical oppressor. The Garrick, in those days, was certainly old-fogy-ridden, and the glories of its social smoking-room in the old club had become a mere tradition. Other clubs; other manners. The Garrick had begun as a gentlemanly Bohemian club, but in process of time members of no profession, of the literary profession, of the learned professions, and of the army had rather elbowed out the actors; and thus, other go-as-you-please clubs, mainly for such of "the Profession" as had not yet achieved greatness, and for literary working-men and journalists, came into existence like mushrooms which spring up in the night; and, being principally nocturnally frequented clubs, the simile may be permissible. A new club on these lines occupied the former site of the Garrick, but as card-playing was over-encouraged, and as a considerable proportion of the members thought that in paying an

entrance fee and a subscription they had entitled themselves to live free of any charges, the club, like the chameleon, being unable to exist on air, put up its shutters and came to a somewhat untimely, but highly respectable, end.

The smoking-room of the Garrick Club is, and ever will be, especially associated in my mind with the start of my most successful burlesque, namely, *Black Eye'd Susan*, which, after running for nearly two years at the Royalty, successfully, nay, with exceptional success, stood the test of more than one revival, and was played well-nigh everywhere, all over the world, at least wherever there was a company to play it, especially wherever "authors' fees" were not of the essence of the expenses. "Play and pay" in those days was the exception, not the rule.

Now the story of the success of *Black Eye'd Susan* is on this wise.

CHAPTER XXI

JOHNNIE DEAN—GARRICK—PREFACE TO *BLACK EYE'D SUSAN*—STORY OF THE GIRL THAT RAN FOR OVER A THOUSAND AND ONE NIGHTS—RETROSPECTING—FORWARDS!

I HAD dined at the Garrick, and was in a position similar to that in which "the last rose of summer" found itself, namely, that "all my blooming companions had faded (away) and gone." The club was empty, for "'twas in the prime of summer time" or towards the end of the season, and opera and theatres, and other London attractions, were doing average business with the *clientèle* remaining in town; but there were no novelties. Thinking I would have a cup of coffee and a cigar before returning home, I betook myself to the smoking-room, of which at that moment Johnnie Dean was the only occupant. He was a round-faced, red-gilled, clean-shaven, twinkling-eyed genial Irishman; sharp, and as full of fun and humour as even Charles Lever could have wished. Like Sam Weller with Mrs. Bardell and Mrs. Cluppins, "we did get a talkin'"; and Johnnie Dean, who was a most entertaining

companion, his jolly, clean-shaven, ruddy face giving him more the appearance of a "Rural Dean" than a thorough Londoner, with as rich a brogue as he liked to assume, spun me many a yarn about the glorious times of the "amateur pantomime" in Albert Smith's day, and of the theatricals, in which he had not only taken a part, but for which he had written a prologue, as given on board the (I forget what) ship when he went out with the party engaged on laying the Atlantic cable. What Johnnie Dean had to do officially with the Atlantic, or the cable, it never entered into my head to question. It was an amusing story, told in first-rate style, and the names of all sorts of celebrities were worked in to perfection. Johnnie Dean had, in me, a first-rate audience. So our talk was about the Atlantic, and sailors, and life aboard ship, and how the nautical drama had ceased to exist since the retirement of T. P. Cook, "the only William," who at that time was still alive.

"Now," said Johnnie Dean, "there's a subject for you, *Black Eyed Susan*."

"*Black Eyed Susan!*" I repeated, hit at once by the idea. "By Jove, first-rate!"

"You could introduce it with what we played," he went on, "with a scene under the sea—just as we did it on board—laying the cable, eh?"

I was doubtful on this point. However, if it were to be a Christmas piece, of course such an "open-

ing" might possibly recommend it. "But," said I, "who'd play it?"

"I'll tell you," he replied. "It could be done at the Surrey. *Black Eyed Susan* was originally a Surrey piece. Shepherd and Creswick are there; and Shepherd is the nearest approach to old 'Tippy' Cook."

"I'll do it," I said with determination.

"Ask him a nightly fee," urged Johnnie, with an eye to business, as a friend and adviser.

"I will," I answered impetuously. "I'll drive there straight away, see him, and be back here to tell you the result."

"I've got some letters to write," said Dean, "and shan't leave the club till you return."

"Good," said I, and, in a hansom, off I went, bubbling over with the idea and foreseeing a real hit at three pounds per night, the only damper on the scheme being that Shepherd had the reputation of being uncommonly "near," and that three shillings was far nearer the fee *he* would offer me than three sovereigns. Still, it would make a hit, and be done all over the country, so I would let Shepherd have the first offer, and would take, well, say, two pounds per night for the piece. So, boiling over with inspiration, I went as swiftly as hansom could take me to the Surrey Theatre, then managed by Messrs. Shepherd and Creswick, and where on that particular night Shepherd himself was playing the part of a sort of

"Gipsy Jack" in a regular Surrey melodrama. I had not looked at the evening's bill, but when I was once behind the scenes I knew immediately, by the sentiments expressed on the stage, which occasionally caught my ear, and by the costumes I noticed around me, that the piece then in course of representation could be none other than a thrilling melodrama of the regular "transpontine" (as it was called in those now "far-off" days) character.

Of course, being unknown at the stage-door, I was informed that Mr. Shepherd was playing and could not possibly be interviewed. However, I insisted, and sent in my card with a note, marked "important and immediate." The messenger returned with a request that I would follow him. I did so, and he led me to the "prompt side," and leaving me at the wing, informed me that Mr. Shepherd would be "off" directly, and I was to await his "exit."

There was a considerable noise going on then. I heard Shepherd's peculiarly squeaky voice, giving out what was evidently a first-rate "exit speech," as it was followed by a round of heartiest applause, and just as I was wondering whether Shepherd would come off at my "wing" or elsewhere, and so avoid me, I felt a tap on my shoulder, and, turning, beheld Shepherd himself disguised as some sort of "cheap jack" or travelling tinker. In his hand he held my card and note.

"You want to see me, eh?" he squeaked.

"Haven't had the pleasure of meeting you before. Well, what is it? I'm not on again for another ten minutes."

I lowered my voice in order to impress him with the importance and the serious nature of my communication. I told him, how, remembering the fame of this theatre, as being the one where T. P. Cook first played William in *Black Eyed Susan*, I had come to him, one of its present proprietors, with my original notes for a burlesque on this highly popular play.

"Not in our line," quoth Shepherd, shaking his head. "Our people wouldn't understand it. They like the genuine article. They'd never care for a burlesque on *Black Eyed Susan*."

I pressed it upon him as such a novelty!! He didn't see it. Johnnie Dean had been certain that "Shepherd would jump at it." Jump! he didn't show the faintest sign of making even a step towards it. In fact, if there was to be any jumping at all on *his* part, it was more likely, as it now seemed, to be in the opposite direction. Could I induce him with terms? I tried it. I said he could "have it for three guineas a night."

"What!!" he squeaked in so startling a manner that I feared his voice would crack on a top note, "Three guineas a night!! My dear fellow, a West End theatre may be able to pay that sum; *we* can't. Impossible! Ten shillings a night would be the

utmost ; we couldn't give more, and we should be playing another piece in front of it."

I saw the force of this reasoning, and hoped that we might adjust terms somehow. But for once my good genius prompted Shepherd to stick to his own terms and to refuse mine, without giving me a chance.

"I'm much obliged," he squeaked as pleasantly as he could, and always compelling himself to be uncommonly polite to a West End author who had come straight from the Garrick Club to seek him—"very much obliged to you for giving me the offer, but, my dear boy"—here the call-boy came up and said, "Mr. Shepherd, sir," whereupon he nodded and said, "All right." From which I deduced his "cue for entry" was to follow within another minute or so—"it's not in our line—couldn't do it . . . I can speak for Creswick and self, and it's of no sort of use to us. At Christmas we do a pantomime and the 'legitimate' business. Thanks, good-bye." He called to the messenger, "Show this gentleman the way." Then having repeated to me "Good-bye," he suddenly broke out into an uproarious song and assumed a jaunty manner, from which signs I inferred that "his hour had come" when he had to "strut and fret" on the stage. So just as he made his *entrée* I made my exit. Then back to the Garrick, where I told Johnnie Dean the result of the interview, and then he put the query, "Why not the Royalty ?"

The Royalty, of which Patty Oliver, whom I

did not know, except by sight on the stage, was manageress, and where I had had such successes, not so long ago, under the Mrs. Selby management, with my *Ixion* and other extravaganzas !

Who better for Black Eye'd Susan than pretty, sprightly, dark-eye'd Patty Oliver, or "Miss M. Oliver," as her name appeared in the bills ? Shepherd's terms wouldn't do for me ; perhaps Patty Oliver might be more amenable. As to this matter of "authors' fees," I must explain that, in those times, the rule was to give "so much down" for any piece ; the price for a work by a popular author being one hundred pounds an act ; and an original burlesque was rated, on the books of the Dramatic Authors' Society, as a piece in so many scenes equal to an act of a drama ; while a farce, which was generally "taken from the French," never commanded more than twenty to thirty pounds, though for a brand new, an original farce *not* taken from the French, a generous manager might possibly have given fifty pounds ; but I doubt it. For "B. B.,"¹ as I have already said, no such sum was received, and that owed nothing whatever to a foreign original. Prices for seats were then much lower than now ; receipts were less, but then so also were rents, rates, and taxes. Anyway, authors were shamefully underpaid ; and that they were so was their own fault. Boucicault's appearance with *The Colleen Bawn*, and his demand to be given a fair

¹ *The Benicia Boy.* See *supra*, vol. i. pp. 380-2.

share of the takings, otherwise he would withdraw the piece and go with it himself, playing Myles-na-Coppaleen, elsewhere, settled the matter with Ben Webster at the Adelphi, and introduced the system of "percentages" and "sharing terms," of which authors were not too quick to avail themselves. It had never occurred to me that a burlesque could be worth a drama *in point of receipts*; and Dion Boucicault's advice was a revelation to me. Would it had been given me very much earlier in my dramatic authorship career! However, better late than never; and remembering of what advantage Dion Boucicault's experience was to me, I have never let an opportunity slip of recommending to commencing authors, whether youthful or not, the simple and perfectly fair "percentage system," that is, the "percentage on the gross takings nightly," as the best and most just way of taking remuneration for their work. "A lump sum down" will ever be a temptation to the impecunious, and lucky the author who, on the first rung of the ladder, is *not* impecunious. I fancy they are less impecunious than they used to be thirty or forty years ago, and far less Bohemian. This may be only fancy, engendered by not knowing very much, just now, about absolute beginners.

However, I adopted Boucicault's advice. I had determined to propose my idea for a burlesque to Patty Oliver, who had recently taken the Royalty Theatre, where the tide of success had not as yet set in.

The owner of the Royalty Theatre was, at that time, one Thomas Mowbray, a theatrical "business man," agent, and, I believe, a money-lender in a small way to such professionals as might be out of an engagement. Tom Mowbray, "the Devonshire Squire," as we used to call him, on account of his never losing any opportunity of informing his friends and acquaintances how "Devonshire is my county," had been an actor and many other things, I daresay, besides; he was well up in old stage traditions, and was on more or less good terms with all the elder generation of actors in my earlier days. Macready he had known, and had appeared on the boards with him; Charles Kean he had known; Fechter he had had business with; Phelps was a friend of his; and, indeed, there were at that time very few persons in any way connected with "the profession" who did not take care to be on the very best terms with "Tom Mowbray."

Now in making my business arrangement, or in "coming to Hecuba," as Mowbray invariably phrased it, with Miss Oliver, I felt myself in somewhat of a difficulty. Our arrangement (I had Dion Boucicault's advice at my fingers' ends, and carried it out "down to dots," appearing as quite a remarkable man of business) was that I should share (not take a percentage, for D. B.'s scheme gave me the alternative of "share *or* percentage") the receipts of the house nightly, after deducting expenses, in which, of course, was

included so much, per day, for T. Mowbray's rent as landlord. So T. Mowbray, as it struck me, being an interested party, would be just the very person to serve as middle-man between Miss Oliver, on the one part, and myself, on the other. Need I say that the Devonshire squire "tumbled" to this with alacrity, of course taking five per cent. on my takings for his trouble. Whether he took another five from Patty Oliver was no affair of mine. What in cash did the old Royalty hold? Well, the stalls were five shillings, the circle from the back of that was three, the gallery was a shilling; and when there was between sixty and seventy pounds in the house it was choke full, and when there was over seventy, well, *then* there were extra chairs put in wherever they could be placed. Now, what were the expenses? The rent of that theatre at that time was certainly not more than three hundred a year at the outside, and I am not at all sure if I am not overstating the amount by a hundred and fifty pounds. I knew that in Mrs. Selby's time it *was* a hundred and fifty pounds per annum, and it had jumped up to that from a state of haphazardous tenancy, when the rent might be calculated upon at a doubtful eighty pounds a year. Ask what the rent is now!! I saw it jump, to my own knowledge, up to a thousand pounds per annum, but this was some little time after the Devonshire squire had parted company with it and had retired. Say the rent could be put down at



A SKETCH BY FRED WALKER IT WAS REPRODUCED BY HIS PERMISSION
ON THE ENVELOPES USED AT THE ROYALTY THEATRE.

under a sovereign a night, then the expenses, all told, of the theatre would amount to under twenty pounds nightly! Yes, the little Royalty, in the old days, was worked at less than eighteen pounds per night; and, had the management been as clever as was that of Mrs. Bancroft (Marie Wilton) and her husband Sidney Bancroft at the little theatre across Oxford Street, within a few minutes' walk of the Royalty, Patty Oliver would have made a small fortune before her early death. The Devonshire squire fixed it up so that I should share after twenty-three pounds nightly; and on those terms I continued to work with Patty Oliver for some time. Artful squire! The charming actress besides her salary pocketed the first seven pounds, as at a much later date Tom Mowbray explained to me, but of course, as *he*, disinterestedly, put it, "the matter was pretty well 'fixed up' between Patty Oliver and myself before *he* was called in."

So the terms were ultimately settled for the burlesque, and Patty Oliver was much taken with the notion of playing the part of *Black Eye'd Susan* before ever a line was written.

Johnnie Dean of the Garrick Club sent me the rough MS. of the submarine burlesque they had played on board ship, and, out of compliment to him, I adopted the notion as a sort of pantomime introduction to the story. It served its purpose, as it was a submarine scene, with gauzes and "lights down,"

and no "principals" appeared in it. Thus it led up to the real scene, the first, the coast of Deal, bright and lively, with nautical music of the most hornpipy description, capitally arranged for a very small orchestra by an indefatigable leader named Hermann, who, when not occupied in the orchestra, retired to a cupboard under the stage about three feet by five, where he copied, composed, wrote music for publishers, and took light refreshment, occasionally interviewing visitors, who could only literally "look in on him" when the cupboard-door was open.

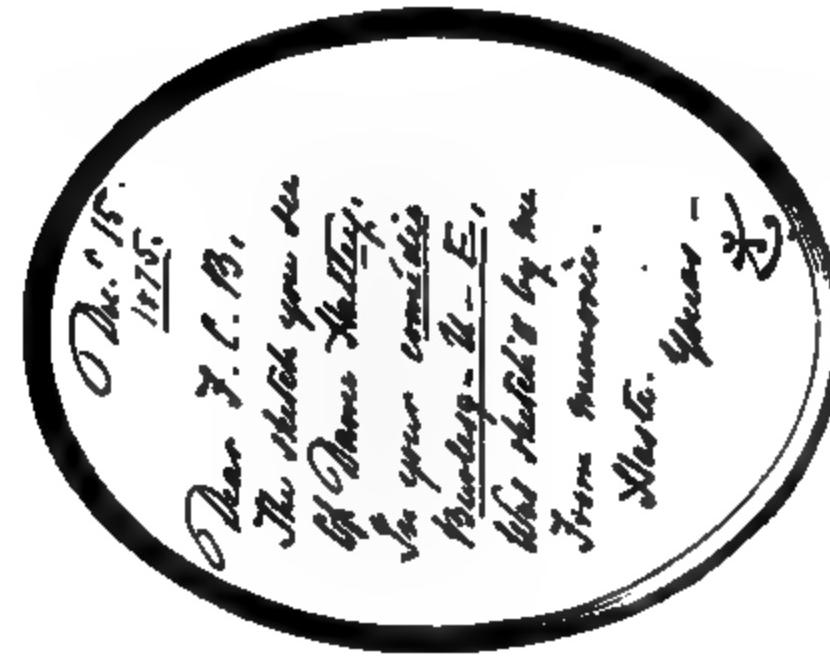
Full of Boucicaultian ideas as to pounds, shillings, and pence, and "business matters," I had not placed this burlesque on the Dramatic Authors' List at first, and when it achieved success I was not going to let country managers have it for the pitiful fees that had hitherto been considered "fair dues" for this class of piece. This move in a new direction "fluttered the dove-cot" of the Dramatic Authors' Society in King Street, Covent Garden, of which Sterling Coyne had been secretary, but who in 1856, I think, had been succeeded by Palgrave Simpson, a more or less retired dramatic author, a kindly man and everybody's friend, generally spoken of as "Old Pal." He was not a bad melodramatic actor as an amateur, and was one of the lights, or heavies, of the Canterbury "Old Stagers," whose performances still continue, with new scenery, younger actors, new dresses and appointments, and a renovated theatre. I am fore-

stalling matters as to the Dramatic Authors' Society. But the result of my keeping *Black Eye'd Susan* off the books of the Society was that *all* the provincial managers met and decided that they would see me and my pieces further first ere they would play one of them. But they said, "If Mr. Burnand wishes us to play his piece on special terms we will make them with him, provided he comes himself and plays in his own burlesque."

When *Black Eye'd Susan* had passed her hundredth night (or more) and was well in for another hundred at least, I took the leading managers at their word, got up a company, made my bargains, and played at most of the leading theatres for some months, until I found (as at another time I did, with "readings") that it must be one thing or the other—either go on the boards as actor and author, or stay off and be content with being author and writer. If this hadn't been my decision, of course I should have had to retire from the staff of *Punch*, as to attend "in my place" at the Cabinet Council dinners every Wednesday, and yet be performing at the same time in the provinces, would have been a *tour de force* only to be accomplished by the historic bird of Sir Boyle Roach that "could not be in more than two places at once." However, I will return to the stage, that is, I will go back again to the point whence I started, the inception of *Black Eye'd Susan*, and proceeding

duly to the completion of it as a five-scene burlesque, the reading, the rehearsing of it, and its production.

In those primitively simple days, the prehistoric days of the drama, when an audience could at reasonable prices appreciate the humour and pathos of a two-act "domestic drama," the broad fun, contemporary "hits and allusions," the comic singing and the sprightly comic dancing in a burlesque, and then end up the evening with a roar of uncontrollable merriment at the broad situations of the "laughable farce to finish with," the theatrical caterers for the public had not so difficult a task as they have nowadays, in this "so-called twentieth century," when the cultivated persons who would direct the public taste turn up their noses at farce, wonder how anyone could ever possibly have been amused by any burlesque that was ever played, and yet crowd to hear and see "musical plays," which, being mere shreds and patches stitched together by several professional "hands," with a thin thread of story that cannot be dignified by the name of dramatic plot, running through them, are rightly described as "variety shows," or "musical pieces." The popularity of such pieces, as long as they can be amended at the will and pleasure of a deft manager, who can have quartettes and songs "let in," and other songs taken out, and new dances substituted for old ones that have lost their "go," will continue until this sort of "variety" shall have lost its charm, and they will then



THE LEGEND UNDERSOOTH THE PICTURE OF DANVERS AS "DAME HATELY"
(IN MY BURLESQUE OF BLACKBALLED AND USAV) DRAWN BY SIR JOHN TENNIEL

give place to genuine comic opera written by a single author and its music by one composer. *En attendant,* where is the composer?

We were all fairly sanguine about *Black Eye'd Susan*, though no one expected the great surprise that was in store for us on the first night, when, after a trio parodying the very favourite old air, *In the Gipsy Life*, by Balfé, sung by Mr. Howard as *Dograss*, Patty Oliver as *Susan*, and Mr. Danvers as *The Dame*, Charles Wyndham (now Sir Charles) and Miss Ada Taylor came bounding on as *Hatchett*, "a Deal Smuggler," and *Raker*, "an Ideal Smuggler," and then the quintette of "Pretty Seeusan" was inimitably sung by them, all dancing the while, and never for an instant quiet any one of them, except for the second, when all had to listen to Patty Oliver's nightingale trill, which, leading from the verse to the refrain, literally brought down the house in thunders of applause. Then the dancing and chorus were resumed, the steps became more and more varied, the movement faster and faster, until Danvers, as Dame Hatley, after bounding about like an irresponsible indiarubber rag doll, or a puppet in a fantoccini show, and after responding to some half a dozen encores, which roused the quintette to fresh exertions, sank exhausted; whereupon Patty Oliver, gasping and smiling, and looking prettier than ever, curtsied in acknowledgment of the compliment paid to her

and her companions, but resolutely declined to "take any further steps in the matter." By this scene the success of the burlesque, which was hardly in doubt for one minute after the first appearance of Mr. Fred. Dewar as *Captain Cross-tree* being rowed to shore in a little boat by Miss Rosina Ranoe as *William*,—we had several "sweet Williams" after she left us to fulfil another engagement, but none with such a go and spirit or who looked the dapper little sailor to the life, that is, to the life required by burlesque, as she did,—was assured, and the scene between the slightly elevated Captain and the coquettish Susan kept the fun going fast and furious up to the culminating point of the court-martial consisting of several admirals of all sorts of colours who, while singing altogether "He's a jolly bad fellow" as the "verdict of them all" on the unfortunate tar, are suddenly interrupted by the revivification of the supposed victim. It was a roughly and very readily written burlesque, with jingling rhymes of indifferent merit; but it was dramatic, and it was acted with such energetic earnestness by all the principals as I have rarely seen equalled in the representations of this class of piece. Dame Hatley's marvellous terpsichorean gymnastics were immortalised by Sir John Tenniel in a delightfully humorous sketch commemorative of the unexpected pleasure he had taken in witnessing these "feats of legs." Charles Wyndham was a wonderful

dancer, and however nonsensical might have been what he had to do, he was thoroughly in earnest when doing it. For nearly two years this burlesque held the boards at the Royalty, exceeding by many hundred nights the run of my previous burlesque *Ixion* at the same theatre under the management of Mrs. Selby. I followed with other burlesques and other pieces, of which only one—partly in prose dialogue, which was a new departure—achieved more than ordinary success. Subsequently Miss Oliver retired from management, and falling ill not very long after quitting the boards, the stage lost one of the prettiest and merriest actresses of light comedy and burlesque. I fancy Patty Oliver was not much over forty at the time of her decease, and she must have gone on the stage very young, as my first recollection of her dates as far back as my Eton days, when I saw her for the first time, and remember her well—a handsome, dark-eyed girl with the prettiest voice possible, playing the *ingénues* at the Lyceum, then under the management of Charles Mathews and Madame Vestris. She appeared (how well I recollect it!) as the youthful daughter, with nothing much either to do or say, of *Affable Hawk*, the leading part, inimitably played by Charles Mathews, in the *Game of Speculation* (a translation of *Monsieur Mercadet*), with Robert Roxby, Frank Matthews (no relation to Charles) as *Earthworm*, and a funny little comedian of the name of Souter.

Happy nights those, when, after the comedy (with Mathews in it), the laughable farce (with Mathews in it), and the extravaganza, with Madame Vestris (and yet again Charles Mathews in it), with young Jack Reeve, Julia St. George, and James Bland, all singing and acting capitally to our great contentment, as boys of fifteen, we (my Cousin Bransby was always the other boy on these occasions) were taken by my father and his friend (generally "Jimmy Rouse," already mentioned), to an oyster shop, I think the name was Knight's,—anyway it wasn't Rule's in Maiden Lane,—in the Strand, where we were regaled with oysters, stout, and bread and butter, brought to us by a plump "cherry cheek'd maid," as "Artaxominous, yclept the great," styled his Distaffina. Jimmy, after the fashion of the young men about town of that day, invariably addressed her as "Mary, my dear," and drank her health in the pewter, one eye wickedly winking at her the while, which complimented Mary, as ready to return chaff as was any one to give it, usually received with a "go along with you," or with that perfect equanimity that never deserted her when she totted up the items of the repast without figuring them out on paper, and presented the bill "out of her own head," to the well satisfied customers. How we boys envied our elders their cigars after supper! How we admired "Jimmy," who could be so easy and affable with the blooming waitress! Happy times! The shop, I

see, is still there, but, somehow, it has lost its homely appearance, by having apparently entered into some sort of rivalry with the modern flaring, glaring, upper-ten restaurations "*où on soupe*," but not in the jolly old Bohemian fashion of "long, long ago," when the "best natives" were only about a shilling a dozen, and all the world was young and had an excellent digestion!

However, the foregoing is only a "cast back" *à propos* of Patty Oliver as *Pretty Seeusan*, who, fortunately for all concerned, "did not say no" to the burlesque when it was offered to her.

CHAPTER XXII

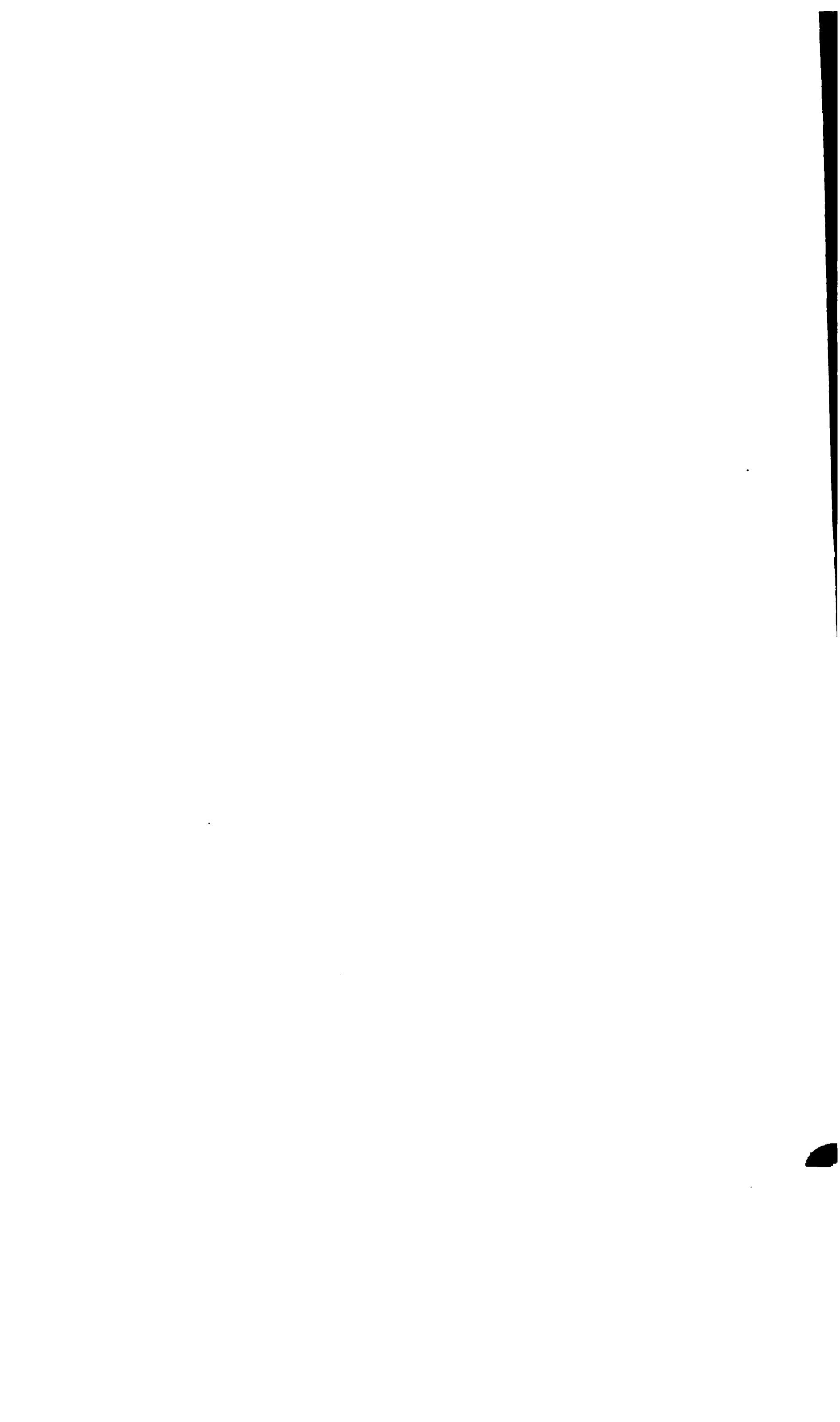
MARK LEMON IN RETIREMENT—GEORGE SALA
AND SHIRLEY BROOKS—PROFESSOR—TOM
TAYLOR—LEECH—THACKERAY—DU MAURIER
—SAMBOURNE—TENNIEL—OUR RIDES—OUT-
INGS—THE “T.P.C.”—*A NOS MOUTONS*—SUSAN
RUNNING—NOTE ON *TRILBY*—*EXPERIENTIA
DOCET* — RETROSPECTIVE — PROSPECTIVE —
BUNN—BACON'S—ARTHUR BACON—OLD SHIP
—BRIGHTON—NYE CHART—AN INTERRUPTION

IN the meantime my work for *Punch* was going on steadily and prosperously. Of my fellow-workers on the staff, apart from companionship at the table, I knew comparatively little, with the exception of Mark Lemon, on whom I used to call at his rooms in town, or at the Tavistock Hotel. Both at his house at Crawley, and when he was staying at some out-of-the-way cosy inn in Sussex, my wife and I, when even we were at Brighton, used to visit Mark Lemon, enjoying his cheery companionship and his excellent stories. With the exception of Shirley and Mrs. Brooks, at whose house in Regent Park we used frequently to dine or sup,

and who, later on, used to drive down to spend the Sunday with us at Hale Lodge, when we lived out of town, I did not "know" any of my collaboreurs "at home," as the Eton boy used to put it, for there was all the difference between being a fellow-schoolfellow of a "chap" and "knowing him at home"; the former being knowledge acquired in a formal capacity, the latter involving intimacy. Horace Mayhew, "the wicked marquis," I knew next best, as him I was wont to come across whenever I had "a night out," or whenever I happened to dine at some eccentric club, the members of which sat late and retired early. These men were of the second or third literary class, who might be included under the heading of "supper-numeraries," depicted by Tom Robertson at his "Owl's Roost," a convivial fraternity, living from hand (with a glass of spirits and water in it) to mouth, doing odd journalistic jobs, knowing something about everybody; a kindly lot, of little profit to themselves, but of marketable value to newspaper editors. Horace Mayhew, when in funds, would assist several of these impecunious gentry, as would that king of Bohemians, George Augustus Sala, the most brilliant, the most quaint, the wittiest, the kindest, and the most quarrelsome of them all. Warm-hearted, soft-hearted, as honest a man as ever breathed, he was so exquisitely "tetchy" that I doubt whether there was a single one of his very best and most intimate friends who, at some

time or another, had not had a desperate quarrel with him about nothing. He and Shirley Brooks were bosom and boon companions until George Augustus took offence at something Shirley had written, and then they went at it like Knights of the Press, in an affray, with their burnished and sharpened steel pens in rest. Who cared for either? A few journalists; still fewer artists, and two or three personal friends, members of second-rate literary clubs. Was the public interested in, or even amused by, this slinging of ink? Not a bit of it; for it was not concerning a matter of any sort of public importance, or of any literary value, that they were at loggerheads; it was purely personal. Their attacks on one another in print were absolutely unintelligible to the general public.

Of Percival Leigh, "the Professor," I knew little more at the time of his death than I did when I first sat next to him at the *Punch* table. Tom Taylor, as a member of the Dramatic Authors' Society and of the Garrick, I used frequently to meet, but only once was I at his house at Lavender Hill. So I may say of Leech, on whom in his house at Kensington I called once, not many months before he died, when he showed me a number of pencil memoranda, in pocket-books, for future "cuts" in *Punch*. Of Thackeray I knew more, in the very short time I had for seeing him in his own home, and at the *Punch* table, than I did of any of the others,





GERALD DU MAURIER

Modem

except Mark and Shirley. With the advent to "the table" of Du Maurier and Sambourne, filling the places left vacant by Leech and Thackeray, began a new era of, at that time, "new men" on *Punch*, who, with the slight advantage to me of being their senior on the staff by a few months, were in effect "co-æquales." Charles Keene I once visited at his studio in Chelsea, only once; two or three times at his house in Kensington. John Tenniel I used frequently to meet quite away from *Punch* business, as he was always a devoted equestrian, and this, as the only form of exercise possessing any charm for me, brought us together. Any number of delightful rides have we enjoyed together, one of the many and one of the best and longest having been a couple of days in Epping Forest, when Linley Sambourne, Tenniel, and myself put up our horses at the Forest Inn, Chingford, dined happily, slept well, rose early, and rode all day, arriving in London about eight in the evening. A most delightful "outing."

While on this equestrian subject, I may as well mention the "T.P.C.," although properly its place in these reminiscences is very much later, the date of its origin being Sunday, May 25, 1890, as entered in the club's diary by our indefatigable secretary, Charles Willie Mathews, now K.C. The commencement of the club was on this wise. Frank Lockwood, Q.C., Linley Sambourne, Willie Mathews, and myself used to ride out pretty regularly every Sunday

morning ; we took our gallop in Richmond Park, and returned to our respective homes in time for lunch. Sometimes John Tenniel would accompany us ; and frequently Charles Russell (then Sir Charles, Q.C. and M.P., that is, before he rose to the Chief Justiceship) would add himself to our number, quitting us at the Robin Hood Gate of Richmond Park in order to pursue his way, sometimes alone, sometimes with one of his sons, Arthur or Charles, to Tadworth Court, Epsom, his country house. During the week, while taking an early jog in Rotten Row, we would be arranging for our next Sunday's ride, and then Sir Edward Lawson, in those days an indefatigable horseman, would ask if he might join what sounded to him likely to be a very pleasant party. So it grew, until every Sunday, in spring and summer, we could fairly count upon a party of five out-of-town riders.

One Sunday at the Greyhound, at Hampton Court I think, while we were lunching, I suggested that as a few commercial men working together invariably formed themselves into a company, so we might turn ourselves into a club.

"There are rowing clubs," quoth Lockwood.

"Why not riding clubs ?" propounded Willie Mathews.

"The Chief" (Sir Charles Russell was always "the Chief") gravely considered the proposal, argued it *pro* and *con*, and finally put it to the vote of the



A SKETCH OF F. C. B. OUT RIDING ON HIS FAVOURITE COW
BY A. CHANTERY CORBOULD

1000.

meeting, when the motion "that such a club be started" was carried unanimously.

We proceeded at once to the election of members and officers. Sir Charles was to be the president, and to be henceforth spoken of and addressed as "President," or, as Sir Frank translated it into his best French, "Mosooy le Presidong." I was elected "Vice-President," a purely honorary distinction, involving no responsibility of any kind, and Willie Mathews accepted the secretaryship. It was further proposed that "notices should be printed and sent to the members, advertising the meet for the next Sunday or any other day ; that these notices should be on post-cards, and," it was gravely added by Frank Lockwood, that "all expenses, necessitated by the printing, addressing, signing, and posting such cards, should be borne by the honorary secretary."

This was carried *nem. con.* amid much laughter, in which the hon. sec. heartily joined.

I fancy our party was Sir Charles Russell, Frank Lockwood, Sir Edward Lawson, John Tenniel, Linley Sambourne, Willie Mathews, Harry Furniss, and myself.

The name of the club was my suggestion. "We," I put it, "were primarily roadsters, starting invariably from London, and bound to the roads until we reached commons like Wimbledon and Putney and the green sward of Richmond. Now the only two distinguished equestrians associated not only with

hard riding, but distinctly with hard-road-riding, were honest Johnnie Gilpin and dishonest Dick Turpin. *Ergo.* Let us call ourselves 'The Two Pins Club.' " And this was carried by acclamation.

When we found that we should for reasons limit our number exclusively to nine members, an amendment was proposed whereby the "Two Pins Club" would be altered to the "Nine Pins Club," which amendment, as appealing to the ear and not to sound common sense, and being of the nature of a legal quibble, abhorrent alike to our President, to Lockwood, and to Mathews, was negatived without a dissentient voice.

So the number of our members was nine and the name of the club was the "T.P.C." Notices advertising the meetings of the "T.P.C., " short "pars," from Edward Lawson's pen, describing the gatherings appeared, mysteriously, in the *Daily Telegraph* and in one or two other papers. In clubs they began to ask what it meant. Mr. John Hare, who had recently taken to riding, was added to our list, and Frank Russell, one of our president's sons, completed it.

We had delightful rides. Lord Rosebery invited the club to lunch at the Durdans, and afterwards confided his opinion to a friend that "this club had only one horse and one story between all the members." The foundation for this witticism having been that out of the nine who lunched, only four

HOSPITALITY TO THE HORSEMEN 47

had ridden over from Tadworth ; and on this occasion there was one excellent story, the special property of the club, which eclipsed all the others. It was a merry midday meal, and everyone was in the best of spirits, especially our host. In fact the club received a number of invitations, but as the horses had to be invited as well, it was not every invitation that could be accepted. The president was hospitality itself ; at his “open house” at Tadworth we were entertained splendidly. The invitation on a second occasion, when Lady Russell was at home, was extended to the “spindle-side” of the T.P.C.

Sir Edward Lawson, too, gave us a magnificent reception at Hall Barn, when some “trained” their horses down ; but I, considering “training” unworthy of a T.P.C. man, stuck to the saddle, and rode from town, staying the next day at Hall Barn, and back to town the day after. I had a companion in Sambourne on my return. Edward Lawson rode part of the way, then returned to his house. Pleasant times to remember.

All this hospitality and conviviality spread the fame of the club to such an extent that applications for admittance to membership came in from all quarters. It was a big success ; but to increase it was to ruin it. Members were now to be admitted because of their social distinction, and the qualification of possessing a horse, or of being able to ride, ceased to be absolutely essential ; and if this was

no longer to be the *sine qua non* condition of membership in a *riding club*, what on earth was the use of keeping up its distinctively equestrian character?

There was a dinner given by ourselves to ourselves, at the Garrick Club, to which we could each ask a friend, in order to propose and elect him as a member of the T.P.C.

We drank the president's health most cordially ; that and I think the secretary's health were the only formal toasts, but somehow or another there ensued a lot of speechifying, nothing formal but everything very amusing. As to elections—why, we elected everybody present ! Mr. Pinero, who rarely rode, Sir George Lewis, who never rode, and Sir Arthur Sullivan, of whose few performances on horseback I had, in the earlier days of our acquaintance, been an amused but somewhat nervous eye-witness (his knowledge of riding being just a trifle superior to Mr. Winkle's), were all elected ; also, I think, some others who not only had never ridden, but who never for a moment had entertained the slightest intention of riding.

As a matter of fact with that dinner, and with those additions to our number the club began to totter. Then, instead of a joyous party of five or seven meeting, only "three horsemen might be seen," as the ancient novelist, G. P. R. James, used to write, "wending their way towards the trysting - place." And the tryst became *triste*. Then two met, and

few days, and I am
Rushing up the credit
of the T.P.C



M.
in the Bois de Boulogne
Jones Jr.

A SKETCH INTENDED BY SIR FRANK LOCKWOOD FOR AN
EQUESTRIAN PORTAIT OF HIMSELF AS A
MEMBER OF THE T.P.C.

1108

deplored the falling off. It was a painful reflection that, in an "equestrian club" so many members, once well mounted, *had all fallen off!* "O what a falling off was there!" Afterwards, there was a temporary remounting; but when our dear Chief became the Chief indeed, Lord Chief Justice of England, then we felt that, if he led us out at all, it ought to be with some state worthy of his dignity. Frank Lockwood was Sir Frank, Q.C., M.P., and we had Sir Edward Lawson, Bart., but Lord Chief Justice of England—no, this was "too high for the likes" of the T.P.C. as a body. Fancy Johnnie Gilpin and Dick Turpin, specially the latter, hobnobbing with the Chief Justice!

No; 'twas not as an "equestrian club" ought to be, "on all-fours"; and so farewell to the T.P.C. for ever, and "if for ever, fare thee well!" we said nothing; we did nothing.

"Oh no, we never mentioned it,
It's name was never heard,"

as the old song has it, and so it passed into the list of clubs that had been, leaving but a name, and many happy memories, behind. At the end of the session of 1892 the "T.P.C." ceased to exist. And I am glad it happened so. The melancholy note to be sounded in every club is when the old friend and companion does not answer to his name on the roll-call. Not so very long after the club had thus silently extinguished itself, we were all of us mourn-

ing the decease of two distinguished men, one Charles Russell, who had become Lord Killowen, kindest-hearted man and staunchest friend, and the other, his constant companion, in business as in pleasure, Sir Frank Lockwood, one of the very best, the most unaffected, as he was one of the wittiest and most genial of all the companions I have ever known and loved.

This is a digression from what ought to be the regular course of Reminiscences ; but it is better, I feel sure, to follow the impulse of the moment, and to tell the tale that seems to come in opportunely, than to wait for the exact place and date where, chronologically, it should appear, as if I were measuring these random reminiscences by the rule of thumb. After this digression, which is not so much a wandering away as a leap in advance, I will attempt a process which was easily carried out by Hop o' my Thumb when he cleverly found his way out of the wood by means of pebbles, or nuts, which he had previously dropped on the road, and which served him as landmarks. In the present case neither pebbles nor nuts, but a few dates, will assist me.

While *Black Eye'd Susan*, which had been produced on my birthday, November 29, 1866, was continuing her triumphant career at the Royalty, I had plenty to do for other theatres, with regular work for *Punch*, to which I gave at least a couple of days a week. And

& *propos* of this regular work, although as a young and ready writer I went to it with a will, and it cost me no effort, yet, when called upon, as I occasionally am, to give advice to anyone with the dangerous facility for regular light journalistic work and for dramatic writing, I am bound to say : Stick to one line of business only ; choose drama, or light literature, if these two come easily to your hand, but, as by dramatic work you can nowadays make ten times the amount that you can ever hope to realise by journalism light or heavy, or even by novel-writing, unless you have some exceptional success when your dramatic version of your own novel will bring in treble the sum you will receive from your publishers, my advice is, *stick to the drama*. You may fail three times out of four perhaps ; but let one play catch the public, and straightway you will become a comparatively rich man. George du Maurier used pen and pencil for *Trilby*. It was excellent writing, reminiscent of his model Thackeray, but with variations in a style that was peculiarly his own ; and the success of *Trilby* as a novel, praised as it was by critics, was not equal to its merits, that is, in England. It 'caught on' in America ; it went like wildfire ; someone, struck by a 'happy thought,' dramatised it, and the drama, in the profits of which Du Maurier only shared, brought in, and went on bringing in, more than the author, in his wildest dreams of avarice, could possibly have imagined.

Fortunately for him, the publishers had generously handed over to him the dramatic rights, with which Du Maurier had parted for some small sum, like fifty pounds down (as not likely to be of any value!), and fortunately also, by the improved law of "copyright and dramatic rights" affecting England and America, Du Maurier's consent to the dramatisation was essential, and thus he became a partner in the dramatic property created by *Trilby* as a play. But in my time, alas! the recognition of "authors' rights and copyrights," at home and abroad, as well as the system of agencies and percentages, was only just commencing. Boucicault had begun it, and, but for his genius for speculation, would have done wonderfully well both as actor and author. I was a bit too late in the field, and my duties being divided, I gradually found myself bestowing far more time on my "*Punch-work*" than upon plays. So it followed that instead of settling down to steadily thinking out and constructing a drama or a comedy, I took to adapting from the French, which was to me a very easy matter, since managers paid well for work done; but, of course, as there are other interests involved, those of the English adapter are not permanent.

The money began to come in with *Black Eye'd Susan* as with dramatic work that followed it, but the large amounts that dramatic authors make nowadays would have seemed impossible, and indeed were so,

to such dramatists as Tom Taylor, Oxenford, Watts, Phillips, Bayle Bernard, the Broughs, Frank Talfound, H. J. Byron, W. S. Gilbert (before he and Arthur Sullivan had "struck ile" at the Opera Comique and then at the Savoy), Reece, Halliday, and other "minor bards," and going back to an earlier date, before my time, to Sheridan Knowles, Bulwer Lytton, Douglas Jerrold, and their contemporaries. Old Maddox in Albert Smith's day used to pay five pounds to a hack translator for turning a French farce into English, and the French author had no rights whatever. Following Boucicault's lead, Byron, I think, increased his terms, but his *Our Boys*, which ought to have, and which would have made him a millionaire in these days, never realised for the author anything like the sum made by the London managers, Messrs. James and Thorne. As fees, I remember Tom Robertson, who had for years vowed, with Savage-Club earnestness, that "when his turn should come he *would* make the managers pay," received, as he once told me, ten pounds per night at the Haymarket when he wrote for Sothern, and so also, I fancy, did W. S. Gilbert, whose *Palace of Truth* had taken the town by storm. Of course, subsequently, the fortunes made by D'Oyly Carte, Gilbert, and Sullivan with their "Savoy Operas" was an exception without, so far as I am aware, a precedent. That composer and librettist did not start at the Opera Comique on the

same footing that they continued when they came to the new house, the Savoy Theatre. This I happen to know, as with Alfred Cellier I was asked to write an opera, which I undertook to do, provided we both received exactly the same terms as had been paid to Gilbert and Sullivan for the *Sorcerer* and *Pinafore*. Those terms amounted to no more, indeed a little less, than what Gilbert alone had received from Buckstone at the Haymarket for his *Palace of Truth*, and less than Tom Robertson had told me he was asking Sothern. Nowadays a dramatic author makes a thousand pounds where some fifty years ago he would not have made a tenth of that sum ; and for an operatic librettist the payment was ridiculously small, though it must be admitted that his work was generally rather slovenly, as may be seen from any cursory glance over the *libretti* of such popular operas as Wallace's *Maritana*, Balfe's *Bohemian Girl*, *The Bondman*, and indeed all the results of the successful Balfe-and-Bunn ("The Poet Bunn," as *Punch* used to call him) collaboration.

So with means and family increasing, and everything going along prosperously, I could take my work as I took my pleasure, easily, and the two went together, for I could always work out of doors, riding or walking, and an idea "when found" was immediately "made a note of."

About this time, as I have said, I used to run

down occasionally to Brighton to stay with friends or to put up for a few days in lodgings, and now and then to treat ourselves, my wife and self, to a hotel, generally Bacon's, whose landlord, Arthur Bacon, was always "an old buck of the first water," with a hearty old-fashioned welcome to all his visitors, an immaculate white waistcoat, a brilliant flower in his button-hole, and such shining boots as illumined his paths on the darkest night. He spoke in a high falsetto, and laughed with a comical little nervous squeak. He was an excellent host, insisted on waiting at table himself to see that everything was properly served, that the waiters did their duty, and also to artfully recommend the most expensive wine at the most expansive moment. This geniality told in the bill, whose proportions, when the departing guest, or rather the "parting" guest, saw it on his last morning, made his hair stand on end like the fretful porcupine's quills. As Traddles observed on similar occasions, "it was a pull." And there was Arthur shining and smiling and rubbing his hands and "hoping to see you again soon" and offering you a glass of anything you liked to take (which you didn't, for fear of reopening the account) before you went off by coach, or train, as the case might be.

Arthur Bacon knew "everybody who was anybody," everywhere and anywhere. His and his brother's hotel, the Old Ship, was for years the

rendezvous of theatrical, musical, and sporting celebrities. Here, if we didn't take up our temporary abode, we were at least quite at home whenever we chose to drop in and dine, that is, when we could afford "to do ourselves particularly well." It was in the winter; I was taking a holiday and amusing myself with the Brighton harriers, while my wife and our little family (I think we had got as far as three then out of the future seven), with some friends, found plenty to do during the day. At night either I worked, or we looked in at the theatre, of which the proprietor, Mr. Nye Chart, was an excellent specimen of the old-fashioned country manager, who had a stock company, capital performances, and, at Christmas, a pantomime that regularly drew all Brighton for six weeks without relying to any great extent upon "stars."

Now this visit was my last long stay in Brighton for mere amusement, as in later years I only went down there on the occasion of our A.D.C. performances, with which during the cricket weeks, in imitation of the Old Stagers at Canterbury, the members of the *Quid Nunc* Cricket Club, Cambridge, combined with those of the A.D.C. to entertain the residents and visitors at Brighton.

The mention of "visitors at Brighton" recalls to my mind an episode to which I propose devoting a separate chapter.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE MYSTERIOUS LADY

ON one occasion of our staying a few weeks at Brighton, I think it must have been in the February of either 1869 or 1870, an old Cambridge friend of mine, a Trinity man, who was exceptionally well off, nominally a barrister, but as a matter of fact a gentleman at large, and one of those who, as the song says, "live at home (or abroad) at ease," had taken up his temporary abode in some pleasant chambers on the King's Parade. Edward Aynsley was a well-read man, a charming companion, and enjoyed the reputation among his intimates of being made of most impressionable and inflammable material where the fair sex were concerned. He was eminently a ladies' man, not by any means a confirmed bachelor, as he was

*"Pretty & sa ranger, could he only find
The sweet and fair one suited to his mind."*

"Teddy A.," as he was familiarly known to his friends, was just on thirty, having stayed up at Cambridge simply because he liked college life, and

had "troops of friends" up there among the younger generation of "Dons."

He possessed an excellent memory for quotations ; he was an admirable scholar, speaking French, Italian, and German fluently, and well up in literature generally. But he had one strange defect, and that was of memory for names and addresses. He could quote the classics, and he had them at his finger-ends. You might rely on him, if betting, for the correctness of a quotation ; but ask him, "Who was that you were just speaking to?" and it was a hundred to one he would reply with a puzzled expression, and then with a sort of pained smile, "'Pon my soul, I know him better than my own brother, but I'm hanged if I can remember his name. However, I shall meet him again, and if not I shall call on him."

"Call? Where does he live?"

"Ah," he would reply musingly, "I can't remember that either. But What's-his-name knows, and I'll ask *him*."

"Who is What's-his-name?" would be the next question.

"Oh!" this a bit irritably, as if annoyed with my denseness, "*your* man—*you* know—fellow with white hat—hotel—brilliant flower in button-hole"—

"Ah!" I saw at once a light breaking in on me.
"You mean Arthur Bacon."

"That's the chap!" he exclaimed joyfully. "Bacon

knows everybody in Brighton. Only got to ask *him*, and I'll find out who Thingummy is."

"Teddy A." would be quite satisfied with his own sagacity, and would take the next opportunity of consulting the authority, unless he had totally forgotten the circumstance, which was more than likely he would do within five minutes of having closed the subject.

One morning I had started on my hired horse, when I saw "Teddy A." in faultless equestrian "get up," and on my singing out to him the refrain that he and I had often heard o' nights sung by the choristers at Evans's—

"O who will o'er the downs so free,
O who will with me ride?"

he replied that he would go down part of the way with me, as he had promised to accompany Miss —Miss . . . but here the name failed him, and I couldn't help him.

"Perhaps I shall be *de trop*," I suggested.

"Not in the least, my dear fellow," said Teddy. "It's rather a romance. I'll tell you." He was now in the saddle. "Yesterday I was riding on the downs, and there was a lady gallops along and her groom following. Suddenly her hat came off; her hair came down. The hat frightened the groom's horse, which bolted for all he was worth, and I came up just in time to get off, collar the hat and veil, and offer my services generally.'

"It's a case," he replied seriously. "She is evidently very well off and well connected, but her people are awfully particular."

"What's her name?" I asked; but I might have foreseen the reply and saved myself the trouble.

"Well," he said, "there's my difficulty. I can't ask her point-blank"—

"What!" I cried, "haven't you found out?"

"Not yet—but I shall," he answered. "You see it's this way. We ride out—and we have lunched out—over at a little rustic place near—near—well, I can't quite remember"—

"Rottingdean?" I suggested.

"In that direction," he replied; "and I've done my best—but somehow I haven't arrived at it—and of course I couldn't ask the groom."

"No, naturally," I replied; "but when you ride back, where does she dismount?"

"I don't know," he said, rubbing his head; "the only time I saw her dismount, the groom was waiting to take her horse, and she got into a fly, and I dismounted and went up to speak to her, when, before I could get to the window, the flyman drove off—stupid ass; and when I thought I would ask the groom where his stables were, he had disappeared."

"Odd!"

"Not at all," he replied quite simply; "I missed the opportunity. But as she has asked me, or as good as asked me, to call at their house—her aunt's,

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I think it is—or uncle's—or both—I shall find out to-morrow by simply putting the question to her."

"And then," I added, "mind you have a pencil ready and *write down the address.*"

"I will, old boy, I will. She is the sweetest"—and he was bursting forth into rhapsody when we found ourselves at the door of the celebrated restaurateur's, which even in those days was in advance of anything of the sort (if there were anything of the sort) in Brighton.

We took our table, ordered the dinner. There were not many people there. Evidently finishing their dinner sat a couple, a gentleman and a lady. The lady's face was partially turned away from us. Suddenly quivering, like a pointer in sight of his bird, Edward grasped me by the arm and exclaimed in an agitated whisper—

"By Jove! there she is!!"

I had only seen his equestrian companion once, as I have stated, but there was no mistaking her peculiar pallor and, as she turned, her really lustrous eyes. She was quietly dressed, and was evidently a lady, and a very elegant well-bred lady into the bargain.

While the gentleman was settling the bill, the lady leisurely drew on her well-fitting gloves, and I saw her shapely fingers sparkled with rings. Then they both rose, the gentleman preceding, and advanced towards the door. In doing so, they had to pass by the table at which we were seated.

Edward rose to the occasion ; that is, with a heightened colour and somewhat flustered face, he stood up, and disentangling himself from the napkin and cruet-stand (which seemed bent on accompanying him, and was, certainly, bent after its sharp descent on to the floor), he advanced so as to interrupt the lady's further progress. This strategic movement, it need hardly be said, he executed in his very best and most courtier-like manner.

The lady raised her eyebrows, clearly astonished, whereupon my friend took his courage in both hands, and blurted out—

“I had no idea that I should have the pleasure of meeting you here, so I take the opportunity”—

He subsequently explained to me that he was about to add some unimportant question as to the rendezvous for to-morrow's ride, which, for the matter of that, had been already settled. But at this point he came to a full stop, not so much on account of the astonished, indeed perturbed, expression on her countenance, but because the gentleman, a military-looking man, above the average height, with a fair moustache, advancing, said severely but quite politely—

“I beg your pardon, sir ; but some mistake I fancy ?”

The lady inclined her head, seemed more amused than offended, and moved towards the door.

“Well,” stammered Teddy, “I really—beg pardon —most extraordinary resemblance”—

The lady paused at the door awaiting her companion, who, addressing himself to Edward, observed courteously—

“Some curious likeness? Ah, I know what that is. Excuse me, I mustn’t keep my wife waiting,” and lifting his hat with the utmost civility, he bowed himself off, and in another minute the door had closed behind them.

Edward sat down without a word. He stared; he frowned; he meditated. At last, brushing his hair back from his forehead with his hand, he muttered to himself, “Well, I *am*—”

“Blank” best expresses his state of mind at the moment. I was considerably puzzled.

Personally, I could have taken my solemn oath in a court of justice that “to the best of my knowledge and belief” this lady was the very identical “she” whom I had encountered out riding. Of course my evidence would have broken down on cross-examination, as I had seen her only once, and then in a costume totally unlike her present attire.

Reasoning thus, I withdrew my support, and as this subject constituted our sole theme of conversation during dinner—a theme with a diversity of variations, but always returning to the original motive—we had not a very lively time of it.

Slowly we sauntered to his rooms in King’s Parade, still discussing the situation.

"If it wasn't she, who the deuce was it?" he asked me.

"I don't see that that matters," was my rejoinder.

Gradually, with our cigars and brandy and soda (whisky was not the fashion then), our talk became discursive, and he told me how he had taken these rooms for two or three months, and was making them as much like his bachelor quarters in town as possible. He had an amusing album and portfolio, and some interesting first editions he had recently acquired, and among other things an ancient desk with a secret drawer in it that had at first "intrigued" him much, but having become accustomed to it he showed me how easy it was to open, and what exquisite workmanship had been exercised on its construction.

"I use it as a bank," he explained.

I fancy the secret drawer contained about a hundred pounds' worth or more of Bank of England notes.

"I'm always buying curios," he explained, "and so it's just as well, when one is away from home, to have 'the ready' at hand."

I congratulated him on being so fortunate as to possess "the ready at hand," and on being able to indulge his fancies so freely.

"Ah!" he said, relapsing into his state of sad wonderment, "I wouldn't remain a bachelor long, if only"—

I knew what he meant. A silence ensued.
Then he broke out—

"If," he exclaimed, "that was"—he paused, then resumed—"if that was What's-her-name, then one of two things follows; either she is a married woman and a hopeless, heartless, bad 'un, who has been making a fool of me, and been playing fast and loose"—

"Literally 'fast,' and very 'loose,'" I cut in.

"Precisely," he continued, "or I have made the most extraordinary mistake that ever a man *could* make!"

"Quite so," I agreed.

"But to-morrow I shall find out."

"How?"

"Because," he replied, "she has promised to meet me as usual, and to take our ride together, and we are to go to Alfriston, or in that direction."

"Then," said I, rising to go, "to-morrow settles it."

"To-morrow *shall* settle it," he said emphatically, as I took my leave.

The next day a telegram summoned me up to town on business. On returning, my wife informed me that Edward had called and seemed anxious to see me. I could not confide to her the story, as the secret was not mine, so I merely observed that I would be at his rooms early next day, or, if not, that we should meet out riding. Next morning,

however, it so happened that, in consequence of my not having left any orders, the horse I had usually ridden had been let out to somebody, and so after writing down in the stable-book the hour at which I should require him for the next three days, I betook myself to Edward's rooms.

"He was at home; yes," said the landlady, "but I rather think," she added in a somewhat confused manner, "that he is engaged just at this moment. I'll inquire, sir?"

"Yes; kindly; will you?"

That Edward should be "engaged" occurred to me as curiously suggestive.

She returned with the request that I should "step up."

I stepped up.

Edward welcomed me heartily, and proceeded at once to introduce me to two ladies; that is, when I say introduce me, he mentioned *my* name, probably because, as the landlady had just announced me, it was fresh in his memory, and so introduced *me* to the ladies, but *not* the ladies to me.

The younger one was the fair equestrienne. She rose at once; recognised me, and was most gracious.

"Aunt," she said, turning to the elder lady, a rather "comfortable"-looking person, without any distinction of manner, "this is the gentleman of whom I was speaking."

"You find the riding about the downs very pleasant?" inquired the aunt, and so the conversation became general and gradually particular, that is, Edward and the handsome young lady conversed apart in low tones, and we, the "chaperons," so to speak, sat in the *embrasure* of the window and "talked of many things."

At last the aunt observed that they must be going, and hoped they would have the pleasure of seeing me during their stay at Brighton. Of course I was only too delighted. Would I come with my friend? Certainly. "Or, indeed, at any time," added the elder lady, "for we are rather dull people I'm afraid, and it is no compliment to invite two gentlemen who are so much about as you must be." I protested. However, there it was. I had been invited. I escorted the elderly lady to the door of her carriage. Her niece, who had evidently delayed her departure on purpose to have a quiet leave-taking, now hove in sight, accompanied by her faithful knight.

Then they drove off.

"Isn't she charming?" asked Edward A.

"Delightful."

"She was up here yesterday, and you should have heard her play the piano! Perfect! By the way, where were you yesterday?"

I explained my absence, and in time inquired how what I called "The Mutton Mystery" had been cleared up.

"*My mistake!*" he exclaimed emphatically.. "At the time we were dining she was at home with her uncle and aunt. Besides, she has never been in Mutton's but once, and then it was with her aunt when they were out shopping."

"That settles it," I remarked judicially.

"Of course it does," he said.

Then he informed me how yesterday, during my absence, he had met her as usual, out riding; how she was "sweeter than ever"; how he had ventured to question her, and how utterly surprised and amused she had been at his puzzlement. Then she told him that as her uncle and aunt were away for the day, she could not ask him to call there then, and how she regretted her inability to invite him to tea at their house. But of course in the absence of the host and hostess, it could not be thought of for a moment. Whereupon he had, diffidently, suggested tea at Mutton's, and after a little hesitation she said she would get her aunt, if she returned in time, to accompany her. The tea-party came off, but not at Mutton's, as the ladies rather objected to a public restaurant, and accompanied him back to his rooms, where the landlady did her very best, and where they enjoyed themselves immensely; so much so indeed that he would have ventured to offer them dinner had they been disengaged. Unfortunately, the uncle was returning, and as he was represented to be of an uncertain, a very uncertain temper, both ladies agreed

it would be wiser for Edward to postpone *his* invitation until he should have made the uncle's acquaintance.

"And that," quoth Edward emphatically, "I'm going to do to-morrow."

"Shall I come with you?" I inquired, after the manner of the "impertinent" who addressed the milkmaid.

"Well—not the first time," he said, which form of reply was remarkably polite, seeing how I had laid myself open to the milkmaid's retort of "Nobody axed you, sir, she said." Then he added in explanation, "You see there's a difficulty. Her father may come down."

"What is his name?" I asked.

"Bother it! I quite forget," he exclaimed. "Oh, I know all their names—and where they live."

"Where?" I inquired, "because *I* forgot to ask that."

"I thought the aunt told you?" he said. "It doesn't matter. It's like this. If her father comes down—he's a dear old man, she says, and I shall like him immensely; but he's gouty and choleric, and he and the uncle between them sometimes make the place rather hot. Should papa and uncle be exceptionally ill-tempered, my coming would be most *mal à propos*. You see?" I did. "Good," he continued, "then you shall hear from me early as to going out riding, and if we do, she'll be there as usual. Then—*nous verrons*."

"Well, anyway," I reminded him, "don't forget to obtain the address, and send it to me in a letter."

"Good," he consented; "I will."

My wife and I had a few calls to make, and some preparations as well, as with the children she intended to precede me to London, thus unselfishly bearing the domestic burden, while I, as the "predominant partner," was to be humoured by having one day's more riding, and such benefit as the air on Brighton Downs could confer on me. Thus it happened that I did not see Edward all day, but on our return I found a note from him to the effect that everything was arranged; the aunt had won over the uncle, and the uncle had undertaken to make things pleasant with her father, who had arrived; then he enclosed an envelope with the address, which was "Mr. and Mrs. Sheriton," and their address, *pro tem.*, was "8 Sussex Square, Kemp Town." Then the note informed me that he was not certain as to being able to ride with me the next morning, but would I come to his rooms at about 10.15, and have my horse sent on to meet me at Sussex Square by, say, eleven, and he would do the same? If he did not hear from me, he added, he would take it that silence spoke consent. But *he must have a talk with me first.*

So next morning I carried out his wishes; and after ordering my horse to be "sent on," made straight for his chambers.

He was ready and waiting, and in a state of unusual excitement.

"We'll walk up to Sussex Square quietly," he said nervously, "and I'll tell you as we go along."

"Good," I replied. "You saw Miss Sheriton yesterday?"

"Yes; her Christian name is 'Millie,'" he told me in a tone which was meant to convey the sort of terms on which he now was with his—well—to put it plainly, his *fiancée*, for, as I gathered, he only needed the formal parental consent to become the accepted "future" of Miss Millicent.

"Pretty name," I observed.

"Very! and *she* is—well, old boy, you may congratulate me." I did so heartily. And then he resumed.

"Practically it was all settled yesterday." Here he referred to some pencilled memoranda. "Millie and her aunt (Mrs. James Sheriton *she* is," he explained, always referring to the *memo*), "came to see me and take tea; and then Mrs. James wrote down the address, and both of them explained matters, and hoped that *you* would accompany me."

"Very kind of them," I interjected. "But shan't I be rather *de trop*?"

"Not at all," answered Edward A. "You see, the guv'nor, old"—a pause, then out came the memoranda, and he added, "Sheriton—Malcolm Sheriton—Millie's father—is, as you've heard, a

very queer-tempered man, the most amiable person, and dotingly fond of his daughter, but a bit of an invalid. He can't bear strangers, and is as jealous as a lover of his daughter's male friends. If he is in good health and has recently been lucky in the City —they must be uncommonly well off, as they've a house in town, and another down at—I forget where, as I didn't note it down"—

"It sounds well," I assented.

"Very," he said, evidently highly pleased. "Well if *he*, the old boy, is all right, then *she* can do anything with him—but if *he* has had a row over politics or business with his brother"—here, being impatient of notes, he supplied the *hiatus* with "Thingummy,"—"then *she* says it would be utterly hopeless for me to call; and, indeed, if I did, it would in effect put all the fat in the fire. Millie didn't express herself in those words of course."

"I understand," I said.

"So we—you and I—are to go up to the Square, and just walk about quite casually, keeping our eye on the drawing-room window. If she—that is, if"—

"Millie," I suggested.

"Thanks, yes. If Millie appears and just waves her handkerchief *once*, it is a sign that she considers it best for me to pay my visit alone; if she waves it *twice*, then *you* come in with me, because that sign is to indicate that her father is neither in

the best nor in the worst of humours, but that the opportunity is—er—favourable."

"And how long will it be before she gives the signal?" I asked.

"Ah!" he replied, looking a bit puzzled, "*that* she didn't positively say. But her aunt advised her to come to the window in any case, and," he went on slowly and emphatically, as if wishing to impress the details on his own memory, "if no handkerchief should be displayed, it would mean that the time was unpropitious, and that the call must be deferred until she could see me again, which she would do out riding to-morrow or this afternoon, when they went out shopping."

"It sounds very elaborate, old fellow," I observed. "Yet there's something of romance about it. But don't you know any mutual acquaintances here or in London?"

"Not here; but in town. Oh! that'll be all right." And he added, "That is exactly what both she and her aunt said would be best. So you see she"—

"Millie," I suggested.

"Yes," he nodded. "Millie only yielded to this when I put on the pressure."

"Put on the pressure is good,—with a ring, eh?" I observed knowingly, whereat he gave a simpering sort of laugh, and we turned the corner of Sussex Square just on the stroke of eleven.

With detective-like caution we crossed from

number one to the opposite side. But Sussex Square is very wide, and when you are on one side of the Square it is difficult to distinguish precisely what may be going on at the window of any house on the opposite side.

So after walking up and down leisurely, we recrossed to number eight. But without absolutely standing as if "on sentry guard" in the road, it was, if not impossible, at least a matter of great difficulty, to see into the drawing-room ; and unless a person within should come quite close up to the window and draw aside the curtains, to see what they were doing was, from our coign of disadvantage, impracticable. A great bit of good fortune here befell us. A nurserymaid and children were entering the gardens, and in an instant it occurred to me, as a most "happy thought," to pass ourselves in with her, just as if we were residents who had forgotten to bring our key with us. This move accomplished, we continued our observations until half-past eleven. In the meantime I had noticed the ostler walking my horse up and down and searching unsuccessfully for its rider.

A quarter to twelve. No lady at window ; no handkerchief ; no movement of curtains ; not a sign.

My ostler was passing the gate on the off side ; I hurried up to him, and said I shouldn't be five minutes.

"Well, sir," he said respectfully, "I 'ope not, as

I've got two other jobs, and I shall get it 'ot from the guv'nor if I ain't back. I'm hover time now."

"Don't wait for me," interrupted Edward. "I am bound to stay here. But I don't want to spoil your morning—so—er—which way will you ride?"

"In any direction you like," I replied, "if you think of picking me up."

"I will," he returned. Then while he scribbled a line, ordering his horse, which the ostler, who knew where his stable was, would for a tip deliver on his way back, I found the nurserymaid, and got her to let me out with her key just as the clock of a neighbouring church struck midday.

I promised to ride over to Rottingdean, across the downs, and to take, in fact, our usual route there and back.

So, after a last look up at the windows of No. 8, off I rode; away hurried the ostler, and Cupid's slave remained in the garden, where he planted himself (as was natural, being in a garden) on a seat, keeping his eye fixed on the drawing-room window.

"Poor chap!" I thought, "he'll be mesmerised, and fall fast asleep."

I never expected to see him out riding that day, and as a matter of fact I didn't. So with a fast trot I shook myself free of the matter, got a good healthy gallop; breathed the invigorating air; rode up to the highest point; surveyed the country round; perceived no solitary horseman wending his way towards me;

heard no shout ; and so took the road home as I had promised.

It was past one. The air was appetising ; and I was putting on a spurt in order to get back to lunch by a few minutes after two at latest, when my horse cast a shoe, and I was compelled to dismount, pick it up and walk with it to the nearest farrier's at Rotting-dean. There, hunger being a sharp thorn, I decided to lunch on whatever I could get while the shoe was being adjusted. Thus it happened that it was three o'clock before I got back to the Brighton stables.

Then I hurried home, only to find it empty, for my wife and children had gone up to town, leaving a note for me to say how sorry she was not to have seen me before leaving. Thereupon I determined to pack myself off by the next train. Before carrying this into effect, it occurred to me to find out how Edward had fared in my absence. I went to his rooms. He was not in. There was, however, a letter for me, evidently written in great haste.

"Most unfortunate. All right ; but all wrong. Come straight away to Hove—at least Shoreham Road—just at end of Brighton,—that direction. Safe to be there between four and five, on promenade by sea. Tell you all.—Yours ever, E. A."

On consideration, I decided to defer my journey to London till the next day, when my wife indeed expected me, as had been previously settled, and *en attendant* I would meet E. A., and hear his latest

intelligence as to the course of true love, which was clearly going a bit crooked.

"Mr. A.," the landlady informed me, "come 'ome in a 'urry, and he found the letter as the two ladies 'ad left on 'im, scarce a quarter of a hour after you two gentlemen 'ad gone off together this mornin'."

"Two ladies?" I repeated in astonishment.

"Yes, sir," answered the worthy gossip, "them two as was here the day as you was, and 'as been 'ere callin' on Mr. A. sev'ral times since. An' I do 'ope 'e'll be 'appy in his chice as well he deserves it; an' both her aunt and his young lady is as nice spoken an' affable as never I wish to see."

"Did they see Mr. Edward?" I asked.

"No," she continued; "they waited, and waited, and stayed on, and then I went out to post a letter for them, and when I come back I asked 'em to have some refreshment, but they wouldn't, and they wos 'ere o' a good 'our, and then I come up agen and said, I was sure as 'e'd be 'ere directly, but they said it was unpossible to wait, and they'd leave a letter, which they did, and I was to be sure he got it when he came in."

"What a *contretemps*!" I exclaimed.

"Ah!" sighed the landlady, "you can't 'ave heverythink as you want in this world."

Leaving her to moralise on the situation, I set out on the way to Hove, having first despatched a telegram to my wife expressing my sorrow at having

been delayed, and naming the hour of my return next day.

I walked to the end of Brighton. It did not then actually join on to Hove as it nowadays does (for all this happened very many years ago), keeping a sharp lookout for my friend; invisible as yet. At last I perceived him on a bench, his back to the sea, and gazing intently on the high road. I roused him from his reverie.

"I can't make it out," he said in an aggrieved tone. "I don't know how long I've been here."

"Beginning to be dusk and a bit dampish," I observed. It was five; February was finishing with lovely weather; but the lamplighter was already on the warpath.

"It's no use waiting," he grumbled. "Something's gone wrong. Fate's against me. Look here," and he produced a letter on half a sheet; a large, clever hand, showing considerable character. Thus it ran :

"Most unfortunate. Tried to get here with aunt before you left, so as to tell you *not to come to-day*. I have to meet father at"—here the word was undecipherable.

"I can't make it out," said Edward despairingly.

I continued reading. "And must stop there until after lunch, when I shall do my best to return along the sea-front with auntie alone. I *am* so sorry. Everything's wrong; everybody in a bad

temper, and *I daren't even hint . . .* Aunt says it will all blow over and that to-morrow. *Try your very best to meet me to-day.* I am so *very, VERY,* **VERY** much upset.—MILLIE.”

“P.S.—I mustn’t add the postscript — imagine it!! *Trust . . . Paid for!*”

“What the deuce does she mean by ‘trust, paid for!’?” I asked.

“Oh!” answered Edward, looking a bit foolish, “that’s a little joke between us.” Then, after a pause, he said gravely, “I’m afraid I’ve got her into some awful row. I’ll tell you what I’ve determined to do. I must hunt up a mutual friend, and then get a regular open and straightforward introduction. And,” he exclaimed, as if suddenly inspired, “by Jove! there’s another chance! She’s going to the ball at the Pavilion the day after to-morrow! I’ll get formally introduced to her and her aunt by the master of the ceremonies or any one of the committee! Then we’ll discuss all our mutual acquaintances, and I’ll call next day to inquire, etc. etc. Eh?”

He was so elated with this scheme that while waving his arm joyously he nearly collided with a lamplighter, and in cleverly avoiding him he came sharply up against a lady just at the corner of King’s Road.

“I beg a thousand pardons!” he exclaimed most gallantly.

The lady started. “Mr. Aynsley!” she cried.

faction of my thought," only, I must ask him, did he happen to remember the aunt's name.

"Of course he did ; it was Mrs Bramford, Nellie Bramford. She was no actress ; only on the stage *pour s'amuser et passer le temps*. In fact she only 'walked on,'" added the Captain, "and I fancy that, a year or so ago, she walked off."

"Was she a goodish-looking, elderly woman, not tall, with grey hair ?" I asked.

"Ah ! I can't say," answered the Captain. "I haven't seen her for an age. And it was only the merest chance my meeting with Polly. I had come down as *avant courrier* to take lodgings, went into Mutton's for dinner, when my old acquaintance came in, all alone ; she pretended to be overjoyed at seeing me, ordered her own dinner and pitched me rather a tale of woe in consequence of some temporary difficulties she was in, and to get rid of her I settled her livery stable bill, rather a heavy one, and at the door of Mutton's we parted the very best of friends, and I went up to town by the late train. *Et voilà tout !*"

We came up with Edward Aynsley and Mrs. Fletcher, who were waiting for us. It was time for the Fletchers to go in to dress, as they were dining out. So we said "*au revoir*," and then, walking to Aynsley's room, we chatted. He too had been trying to find out if his old friend, Mrs. Fletcher, happened to be acquainted with a Miss Millicent

Sheriton, whose name he could not recall, but whose description he was able to give to a nicety. Unfortunately she did not recognise the picture of the lady, and so was unable to introduce him. He had confided in Mrs. Fletcher, and she had promised to give him every assistance if he would introduce the charming young person to her at the Pavilion ball.

In return, I told him what I had ascertained, and, of course, as to our having come across the Captain and Miss Polly at Mutton's, Edward Aynsley had been most discreetly silent.

The shops were all ablaze as we walked back, and my friend was much attracted by some quaint old rings in the shop of a curio-dealer, at that time well known to all visitors and residents. He entered, and, in the course of half an hour, made several purchases, for which he said, being unknown to the dealer, he would pay cash on delivery next morning.

We dined together at Mutton's; but no Polly, no Millie, no aunt—nobody of any interest, at least, to us—came in while we were there.

"See you before I go to-morrow," I said.

"Must you be off?" he asked.

"Yes—early train—so good-night," and we went our several ways.

Next morning, with my portmanteau, rugs, etc., in the fly, I went out of my road to the station, giving myself plenty of time to call on Edward as I had promised.

I ran upstairs. He was up and *deshabillé*. The shopman, from the curio-dealer's where Edward had given his order on the previous evening, was in the room with the packet of curios, rings and other valuables, and Edward was sitting at his writing table, with his desk open before him, on which he was gazing blankly. His landlady was there, looking as scared as her lodger; and the shopman's face was a caution!

"Hullo! old chap," I began heartily.

He bounced up. "My dear fellow, I am so glad you've come. You remember this desk?"

"Certainly, I do," I replied readily. "You mean the one with the secret drawer and the notes, over a hundred pounds, in it?"

The tradesman looked from one to the other, but now more trustfully.

"I never knew as Mr. Haynsley"—began the good landlady, who felt herself in a very uncomfortable position.

"No, no," said Edward testily snapping her up; "no one thinks that *you* knew anything at all about it. I happened to tell this gentleman here," he said, addressing the tradesman and indicating me, "and *he* saw the notes."

The tradesman bowed, and said that the sooner the police were informed the better.

Aynsley went on still speaking to him. "If you will kindly take these things back, here is my card,

and my cheque for the amount, which you can have after you have inquired at your bankers here to see if it is all right."

The man pocketed the card, wrapped up his *bijouterie*, and bowed himself out.

"How them notes could ever"—began the land-lady. "There ain't been a soul in 'ere, except this 'ere gentleman (meaning myself) once when you was out, Mr. Haynsley, and then I was present, and no one else, not a born soul, except the ladies as came yesterday in your absints."

"Look here, Mrs."—he couldn't recall her name, so he substituted, "my excellent lady," and he continued impressively, "don't you breathe a word of this to anyone until I have talked to you again on the subject. Greatly oblige me."

She vowed herself to eternal silence and went downstairs.

My time was up. He implored me to defer my departure just for the next train. Unwillingly I consented; I felt he needed a friend at such a moment, and I was sure my wife, like Lady Macbeth on a totally different occasion, would "applaud the deed" of her husband.

In ten minutes Edward Aynsley was dressed. My fly was at the door; we jumped in and drove straight away to No. 8 Sussex Square!!

The direction given to the coachman took my breath away.

Arrived. There was the house just as we had seen it : blinds, curtains ; all quiet and calm as would be the residence of an invalid for whose eyes the seaside glare would be too powerful.

We descended. Edward was pale ; we were both nervous ; but he had determined to see her at all risks.

He rang. A quietly dressed manservant answered the summons and looked at us inquiringly. Edward was nonplussed. He had totally forgotten the name.

I came to his rescue.

"Is either Mr. Sheriton or Mrs. James Sheriton at home ?" I asked.

The man looked at us steadily, and replied, "No such names here, sir."

"Excuse me," I went on ; "is Miss Millicent Sheriton staying here ?"

"No, sir. Leastways, not since we've been here ; but, if you don't mind waiting — you'll excuse me askin' you to wait outside — I'll take the name in. Mrs. Sheriton and Miss Sheriton."

"And Mr. James Sheriton," I added.

He closed the door and left us under the portico, nodding sagely at each other as who would say, "We are getting to the bottom of it now."

Within a few seconds the door was reopened by the butler, who was accompanied by the temporary tenant, a tall, business-like looking elderly gentleman.

"I haven't heard the name you mention," he said,

"nor is it that of the family which was here before us. Indeed, though we have not been in the house a month, I have looked in the directory and I can't find the name; not, at all events, in Sussex Square."

The directory! We had never thought of that. But, even if we had, a temporary lodger's name would not be entered there, though it would possibly appear in a local paper.

"Why don't you inquire at the post-office or of the police?" he asked.

We "thanked him and withdrew," like a deputation. Then we drove to the post-office.

No; no letters there for any such name.

Last resource, to the office of the head inspector of the police, and to personally interview the chief constable.

We invented a reason for our inquiry, but we managed it badly, and it was evidently a flimsy pretext.

"I wonder, now," said the sergeant, referring to a ledger, "if that's the same party as there was an inquiry about the day before yesterday, because they've been going it pretty strong, and the place was getting a bit too hot for 'em. But if it *is* that lot, they've vamoosed."

"Meaning?" I inquired.

"Gone; hooked it; disappeared," explained the sergeant. "Elderly woman, comfortable, sometimes grey, sometimes dark; stout, military-looking gent

occasionally with 'er, who does duty for father or uncle, as the case may be; and the girl herself—well, I should call her uncommon good-looking, if she weren't so precious pale. But she *has* eyes."

"Rather," chimed in the second official; "there ain't a thing she doesn't take in."

"Or a person," observed his chief. And both laughed.

Then the chief constable inquired if we should recognise the parties by photographs?

"Certainly we should," I said, answering for poor Aynsley, who was hopelessly broken up.

Then from a pigeon-hole (what a name for the place where only portraits of the hawks are kept!) he produced three photographs.

The first was of an elderly lady. Well, *her* we recognised. O my prophetic soul! the aunt!

The second was of a pale, handsome, elegant woman in walking costume; and the third was of the same most attractive lady in a perfectly-fitting riding-habit.

"They were stupids to have their *photos* done," observed the sergeant. "These were taken at Bradford and forwarded to us only yesterday, and, but for their getting wind of it, I fancy the originals would have been in our hands to-day."

"On what charge?" I asked.

"That's as may be," replied the wary official. "Do you gentlemen wish to prefer any?"

But we preferred—*not* to have anything to do with the matter.

Poor Teddy had collapsed. My belief is that, had he met that girl, she would have scorned his suspicion, would have told him he was unworthy of her love, and that he would have thrown himself at her feet and refused to rise until she had fully pardoned him and he had made her Mrs. Aynsley—which, thank Heaven, never happened. Teddy took to yachting and travelling. In the autumn I joined him for a short cruise. Once only in the cool of the night, while smoking our last cigar by the light of a glorious moon, I ventured to ask if he had ever heard of Millicent again.

He sighed and shook his head.

"She was a deuced handsome girl," he said, "and an uncommonly clever one. If she had only fallen into good hands"—

Here broke we off.

The rest was silence, broken only by occasional snoring.

CHAPTER XXIV

SOTHERN—THE SUPERNATURAL—AT THEOBALDS
—A DISTURBED NIGHT—THE HAUNTED ROOM
—THE STORY—BY DAYLIGHT—ITS MORAL—
MY HOST'S VIEW—MORE SPIRITS—A PARTY
—THE MEDIUM—HOME, SWEET HOME—EVEN-
ING WITH HOME—SNUFF—*SEANCE*—CON-
SEQUENCES—*CHEZ LORD DUNRAVEN*—A
STRANGE STORY—NO SOLUTION

THE story of “the Mysterious Lady” recalls to my memory some of that eccentric comedian Edward Sothern's practical jokes, of which, however, the most notable having, I think, been fully told elsewhere, need not here be repeated. He used to pretend a deeply serious interest in spirit-rapping; and that he and a friend of *his* in the City, a professed practical joker, were on the best of terms with some of the “leading spirits” professing at that period the “black art,” led me to suspect humbug, not quite harmless, in the entire business. Unless a “professor” be actually caught red-handed in using physical force to produce raps, knocks, and mysterious communications, it is difficult to pronounce positively on the presence of trickery; nor

in all cases was there any deception, for it seems to me an undeniable proposition that certain individuals may be gifted with some strange supersensitiveness, just as one species of plant is "sensitive" and one species of eel "electric." And why should not such special instances be paralleled among human beings? That, primarily, such "signs and wonders" as may be performed by these specially gifted persons ought to be mistrusted we may assert on the plain warrant of Scripture, which bids us to "try the spirits," and therefore the most severe tests, when it is necessary to enter into such matters at all, should be applied. Neither Sothern nor Johnnie Toole ever viewed the manifestations from any other point save that of the practical joker. In some instances Sothern found this a dangerous matter, and in America the result might have been serious to one of the victims whom his practical joking, having gone too far, had very nearly rendered distraught. It was stopped in time. My friend Fred Wilson of Theobalds, whom I have had occasion to mention more than once before in these pages, was very much interested in anything and everything that savoured of the supernatural. I was always under the impression that rats were the cause of most of the weird noises at Theobalds, where the owner heard sounds that did not reach the ears of ordinary mortals—"for which relief much thanks"—and saw, or thought he saw, ghostly forms, armless

to whose company that of a fairly respectable ghost would be infinitely preferable. But in any case, be it what it might, I hoped that if only I made enough noise at the window the thing, whatever it was, would scramble off, jump down, or fly away, according to "the nature of the beast,"—and depart.

Nervously therefore I rattled the half-closed shutter. The sound ceased. More nervously I, with great caution, folded the shutters back. A chill, cold air seemed to encircle my loins, and again came the mysterious scratching and the sighing more distinctly than ever! Heavens! what was to be the next act in this tragic drama? Should I be alive in the morning to tell the tale? Of course the idea of a burglar was preposterous; no one ever yet heard of a broken-hearted burglar on the top of a ladder sighing because he could not effect an entry with his "jemmy," and scratching for admission, like a locked-out pet dog. No burglar. One other supposition, as the sorrowful sighing and timid scratching were resumed. Might it not be the result of the struggles of some animal, a rat or a squirrel, whose tail had been shut into the window? And I remembered that squirrels not only scratch but bite viciously. So do bats, and their bites are poisonous; at least it occurred to me that I had read this, probably in some natural history written by Mr. Barlow for Sandford and Merton.

It might be any one of these horrors of the

night ; but, on the whole, I inclined to the ghost, remembering that this was *the* haunted room, and therefore, so to speak, had a certain reputation to keep up.

The blind moved.

I dashed forward, pulled the string, up went the blind with a rattle and a snap, and I stood stock-still prepared for the worst !

Nothing. Thank Heaven, no pale vampire-like face peering in through the window panes. I was well up in the tricks and the manners of vampires. No vampire here. Clouds passing over the moon and the tops of trees swaying to and fro in the wind. Then the moon shone and fell full on the leaves of the tree close to the window. . . .

Horror ! The hasp of the window was unlocked !! Whatever was still trying to get in had certainly effected this, and in another second the lower frame would be lifted and The Thing (ugh !), whatever it was, "The Dweller on the Threshold," would leap on me !

I shrunk back. Then changing my mind I dashed forward and made for the window-fastening. That I would close at all hazards. The sash would not yield to pressure—the bolt had sunk a good quarter of an inch from its usual position ! Oh the terror of that awful moment !

The lower part of the frame was struggling upwards. The scratching and the sighing were

more persistent than ever. Then I saw . . . *Something that had penetrated under the frame forcing its way in between the sash and the ledge!! . . .*

It was the thin end of a branch of a tree.

The window had been left open ; this overgrown branch must have been swept in suddenly by a strong gust just at the moment when the servant was closing the window for the night ; and she, not giving herself the trouble to clear it out and fasten the hasp, left the branch where it was, partially closed the shutters, and contentedly departed.

Need I say that to shove the branch outside, to shut the window, fasten the hasp, pull down the blind, and close the shutter, to nip into bed and tuck myself up, was the work and the pleasure of a moment, and that another few seconds saw the haunted man as fast asleep as ever he was in his life, and so remaining "in the arms o' Porpus" until the breakfast gong had sounded twice and the mechanical cuckoo had rushed out of his private office "over the clock" and in a throaty way had announced a quarter-past and had then jerked himself back, closed the door with a snap, and retired in disgust after wasting his notes on a sleepy world that was deaf to his warnings. About an hour or so later, as timed by the irrepressible cuckoo, whose ardour no slighting could repress, we had assembled at breakfast. Then I told my ghost story.

Breakfast time is not favourable to serious story

telling. There was no sympathy. A lady present said we oughtn't to have stopped up so late.

When our host appeared at his later breakfast, I repeated the tale to him ; with a purpose ; that is I wished to show him how absurd it was to call that the haunted room and to attribute any mysterious sound to supernatural agency.

He listened, coughed, nodded, shrugged his shoulders, drank his tea, and simply said—

“Yes. You’re quite sure you didn’t dream it all ?”

Of course I was sure.

Then he observed, “The window could not have come open of itself, and *all the windows at night are always carefully closed.*”

As he was a most particular man, and as my explanation involved the charge of remissness against a housemaid, I held my tongue, and he added this story to his collection of all the other incontrovertible legends concerning the haunted room which he was wont to recount to his guests, and in future I was referred to for the corroboration of the facts as he stated them. Curious position ; but if a visitor, who is fond of visiting, cannot stretch a point in favour of his most hospitable host’s eccentricities, then he had better scratch his name off the lists of such of his friends as are possessed of country houses and indulge in peculiar “fads.”

It was not to be wondered at that Fred. Wilson,

being so fond of the weird and mysterious and of attempting to take "peeps behind the veil," should contrive to make the acquaintance of Mr. Home, the then celebrated spiritualistic "medium." To ask him to Theobalds, where there was a house full of guests (it was in June or July I think), was the next thing, and fortunately my wife and myself were also invited to be of the party. We were down there for some time; but Home being full of engagements could only spend a couple of days at Theobalds.

We were all much interested in the "Seer," about whom everybody was talking, for at that time "spiritualism" was literally "in the air."

We were a mixed company of I daresay about ten persons, ranging in age from Mrs. Austin (mother of the present Laureate), a dear old lady, quite deaf, to two young ladies, our host's cousins. A Chancery barrister, a youthful composer, Mr. Walter Austin (a brother of the present Laureate), then commencing his successful musical career, a country squire and his wife, the cousins aforesaid, a very shrewd though stolid man with a remarkably handsome and very lively wife, and my wife and self with our host and Mr. Home, made up the party.

Croquet was the order of the afternoon, refreshments in the garden, lounging, chatting, reading; then dinner, comparatively early, for our host at all times of the year stuck to his 6.30 dinner ("so," as he said, "to give us plenty of time in the evening"), and

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after a short stay in the drawing-room the entire party used to make a move to the smoking-room, for in those benighted days we did not commence our tobacco immediately after dinner, but stayed for some time drinking port or claret and exchanging opinions, for what they were worth, on things in general. The snuff-box, a very handsome one still in my possession, was handed round, and in those days we were all "friends at a pinch." Nothing consolidates a party after dinner like a pinch of snuff. I am informed that snuff-taking is (in 1902) coming into fashion again, but the evidence for the fact is scanty. All depends *how* snuff is taken as to whether it is a cleanly fashion or very much the contrary. However, we were all at Theobalds "snuffers" *pro tem.* first and smokers afterwards.

On this occasion, however, our host had induced Home to give us a *séance* in the library, and so the visits to the upper regions, where the spirits (and aerated water) awaited us, was temporarily postponed. For what reason I could never ascertain, Mr. Home at first positively refused to hold any *séance* if I were present. I indignantly protested. I earnestly assured both him and my host that to treat so serious a matter lightly (specially if it were a dark *séance*) was utterly foreign to my nature, and that if Mr. Home would kindly consent to my being present I would be, as Sam Weller puts it, "dumb as a drum with a hole in it."

On the strict condition of my remaining mute and not interfering in any way, although Home foresaw probable failure in consequence of my "antagonistic influence," I was allowed to take my place as one of the solemn conclave seated around the mysterious oval table. The room was dimly lighted, and it was not at first "a dark *seance*." I watched the proceedings very closely, and just when everybody was becoming rather weary of doing, seeing, and saying nothing, there were distinctly heard several raps, not given as a postman would at the front door, nor as would an auctioneer with his hammer, but sounding like the tick, tick of a tape machine or the clicking caused by the sending or receiving of a message at a telegraphic station. It rather reminded me of the mysterious scratching at my window already recounted. To locate it seemed to me to be difficult. It stopped; it was resumed, and then suddenly Home announced that some spiritual body invisible to all except the operator wished to make a communication to Mrs. Austin, who was deaf, as I have already mentioned. Walter, her son, was present, and he asked what name the spirit gave? Home, interpreting the raps, made out a female name, I forget what it was, but this is, here at all events, an unimportant detail. The name, however, was the right one, and the inquirer requested that the message for his mother might not be delivered to her, but to himself. This was conceded. Whereupon the raps,

being interpreted and read out just as a telegraph clerk might take down a message, were explained to mean "God bless you, happy at last," or some such sentence, which, as will at once have been seen, was capable of more than one interpretation, according, as Immortal Sam puts it, "to the taste and fancy of the speller."

"I won't trouble my mother with it," said our friend, explaining to us, "because she is just now very anxious about a relation, Mrs. —," and here he mentioned her married name, "who, as we have heard only this afternoon, is in a very critical state."

He told us subsequently in the smoking-room that his (I think) cousin's seizure had been sudden, was indeed a relapse when she was on the high road to recovery, otherwise his mother and himself could not have accepted the present invitation.

There were other raps, other messages, of no consequence, and nothing happening, we all became slightly weary of it, and so Home, who, probably, had been bored by the futility of the *séance* far earlier than any of us, pronounced the sitting ended —*causa finita est*—and we all, that is, the males of the party, more or less impressed, trooped up to the smoking-room to take our last cigar, or pipe, and more spirits (with water), before "turning in."

For a time we naturally enough discussed spiritualism, but as Home showed no inclination to indulge our curiosity or enlighten our ignorance, the conver-

sation merged into all sorts of general topics. Before we retired I had made friends with Home, and got on with him so well that he accepted my offer of a seat in my trap, as having driven over from Hale Lodge, Edgware, where I then resided, I was driving up to town early on business, intending to return to Theobalds in time for dinner. This arrangement suited him to a nicety, as he could not prolong his stay; and it would suit me too, as I foresaw the chance of a quiet chat with the accepted Representative of Spiritualism.

The next morning, as most of the guests were leaving during the day, we all put in an appearance at a not very early breakfast. Our host not being down—his health did not permit him to be even a moderately early riser—the honours were done by Mrs. Austin, who sat at the head of the table and undertook the distribution of the tea and coffee. It was about the hour of second post; we were all expecting letters and papers; and in a general way inclined for conversation, which is a rare state of things at breakfast time early or late. In the midst of our pleasantries and personalities the second post arrived, and the contents of the bag were brought in by the servant, who in this bachelor establishment served as major domo, groom of the chambers, confidential valet, butler, and footman. Never was such a useful manservant as Young. To our host a “Factotum” absolutely invaluable. So Young,

who was on the best of terms with everybody, distributed the letters, with an appropriate remark to each individual, for he was one of those old-fashioned servants who availed himself of his master's permission to join in the conversation that took place at luncheon, breakfast, or dinner, and was therefore invariably referred to as an authority not to be lightly contradicted. This morning, however, his remarks were limited, and were not intended to be humorous, as the appearance of the letter he delivered last had depressed him : it was for our dear old lady at the head of the table; it was edged with deep black, and was marked, as far as I can remember, "special delivery." We had all noticed it. Directly Mrs. Austin had given one glance at it, she rose hurriedly, and, without a word, quitted the room. Her son followed her. It was a painful shock to us all. We regarded one another curiously. Home said nothing, but gave the closest attention to the "from-hand-to-mouth" business of breakfasting, in which we all were engaged.

"Some bad news," was a wise opinion expressed in sympathetic tone.

"Evidently," softly murmured the younger cousin of our host, who had appointed herself, temporarily, to the office of tea-and-coffee maker.

I looked at Home. He was not to be drawn.

Then a lady at table nervously ventured upon a reference to our *séance* of the previous night.

"Ah, yes," said Home, in an absent-minded manner.

The lady recalled the facts, commenting on them as being "strange."

"Not in the least," said Home quietly. "To me, if the news conveyed in that letter has anything to do with the spirit-message delivered last night, the incident is a matter within my ordinary experience."

At this moment Walter Austin returned.

"My mother is very much upset, and begs you will excuse her," he said, addressing himself to the cousin who was his mother's *remplaçante* at the breakfast-table.

Of course we were all genuinely grieved and earnestly sympathetic, Home included. "Might we inquire?"

"Yes, certainly," he answered, and then, as the young lady had done a few minutes before, he too recalled the message given at the *séance* on the previous evening. The letter had come by special delivery, and announced his relative's death, which had taken place yesterday evening.

This event broke up the party "in most admired disorder," and Home being as anxious to return to town as I was to have the chance of a quiet chat with him, I ordered my trap, had his portmanteau placed in it, and away we went. We chatted on all sorts of subjects by the way, and at length touched on Theobalds, the company, and the *séance*.

"That was a very happy hit of yours," I observed.

"What was a happy hit?" he inquired, most innocently.

"Why, the message of the spirit to Mrs. Austin," I answered.

"It was no 'happy hit,'" he returned, evidently rather annoyed, but with an air of imperturbable gravity; "it was a fact. I do not profess to exercise any control over the spirits."

"But," I argued, "putting spirits out of the present question, though I admit that as to the rapping and so forth there is much which seems to me very difficult to explain, except on the hypothesis of spirits of somewhat questionable character"—

"*That*, of course, may be so," interposed Home.

"Allowing that," I went on, "wouldn't it be quite possible to arrive at such knowledge as would show an apparently intimate acquaintance with facts supposed to be known to only one person, without the intervention of spirits?"

"I don't quite understand," said Home guardedly.

"Thus," I continued, "a stranger arrives, he mixes with all the house-party, and with his ears and eyes open he finds out in a very short time and quite accidentally that two persons out of the number are specially interested in the health of an absent relative; that they have their qualms of conscience as to whether they ought to have left home at all, and determine to return as soon possible, hoping, how-

ever, that, *en attendant*, no news is good news, and so forth.

"Well?" inquired Home guilelessly.

"Well," I pursued, "would it not be comparatively easy for anyone professing to tell fortunes by cards or by palmistry, to have communicated to that lady, some hours after, late in the evening, after the last post had been delivered and no news had arrived by it, and when the delivery of a telegram was as a hundred to one chance, very much the same sort of vague message, like 'I am happy,' which was conveyed by your invisible, but not inaudible, spirits? Does 'I am happy' mean 'I am dead and in heaven,' or 'I am recovering,' or 'I am well'?"

"How on earth should *I* know?" protested Home. "I only profess to be a medium of communication, and I can no more give you the true interpretation of any message from the spirit world than the electric wire can inform you as to the real meaning of any 'code' word, or for the matter of that of any message whatever that is sent along it."

Of course, I agreed. It was evident that we were on dangerous ground. He preferred avoiding the question, "Do you accuse *me* of being a humbug and cheating?" and I should have been puzzled to answer him directly. I did not accuse him, as I was ready to admit that such spiritual interventions, as he professed to obtain, were possible, but that in this particular instance, as in many other similar ones, the

said intervention of spirits was "not proven," indeed, was decidedly doubtful. Whether Home's "spirits" were "above" or "below proof," I have never as yet been able to decide.

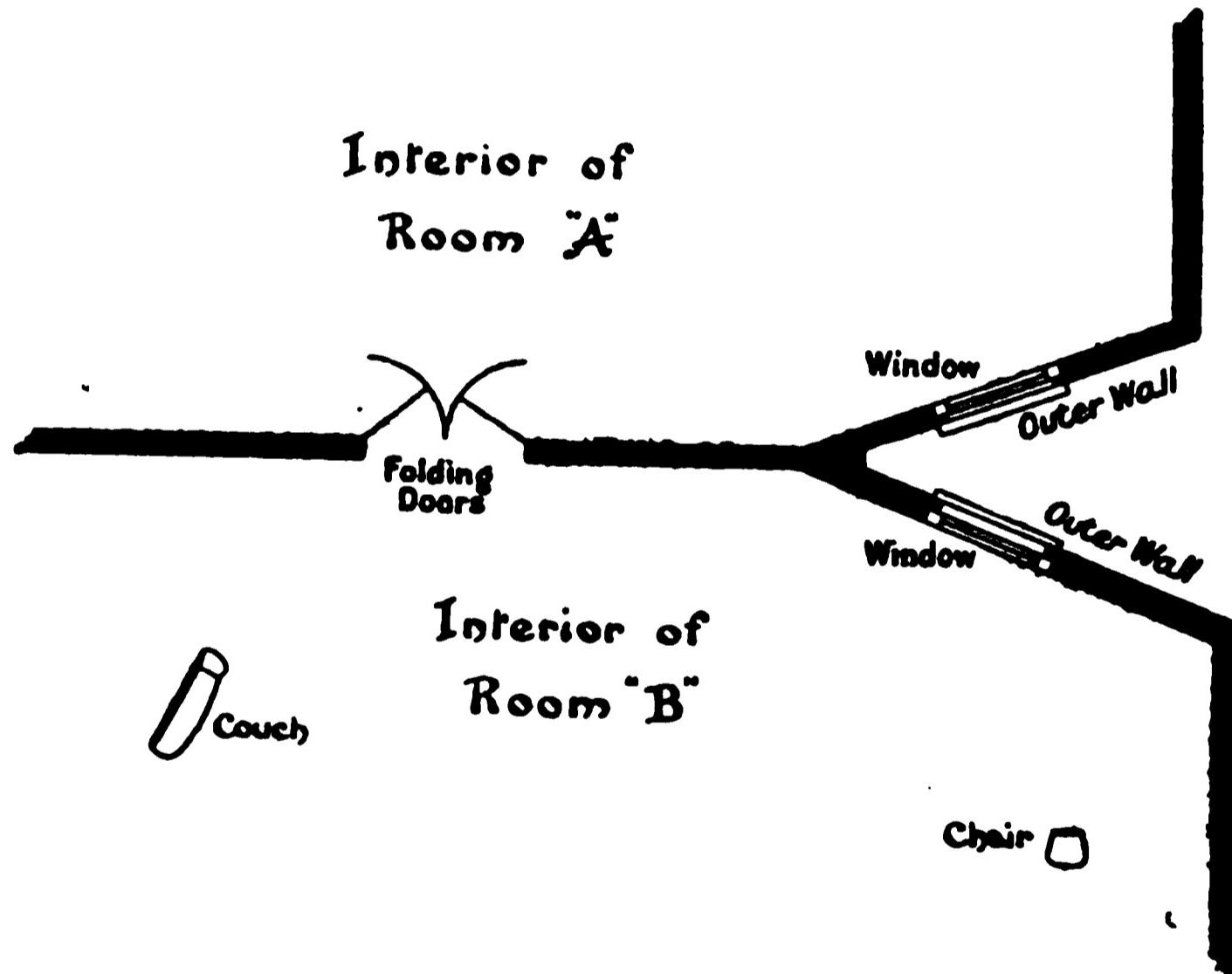
We parted good friends, mutually understanding one another, and I do not remember our ever having met again.

Lord Dunraven's story as to Home floating in the air, which I think appeared in some magazine, but of which his Lordship kindly furnished me with an account written out in his own hand (I have it by me now among my "archives"), may be by this time forgotten. In a few words I can, and I think I ought to, recall it, as it certainly tends to clear Home's character and to make us wonder what sort of weird creature he was. Before and since the time of Simon Magus, to float in the air is, as I gather from certain occult works on "signs and wonders," one of the recognised manifestations of supernatural agency. We have the evidence of Holy Writ in confirmation of the phenomenon. It is, as we know, as dangerous as is "playing with fire," since, though the magician may "go up like a rocket," yet, the spirits being notoriously untrustworthy, he *may* "come down like a stick."

Lord Dunraven, then Lord Adair, had, I believe, rather "taken up" Mr. Home, who had been raised to the rank of a Lion of the Season, and had gone in for spiritualism, just as, being of an inquiring turn

of mind, his Lordship in his time has tried his hand at many, if not at most, things.

It was in Lord Dunraven's rooms, not on the occasion of a formal professional *seance* as I understand the account, but of a casual visit paid by Home, who found Lord Dunraven at home chatting with a friend. There were two rooms which communicated with each other by folding-doors. A window of one room faced a window of the other. Each being on opposite sides of a triangle, as in the plan here shown—



The rooms were on the first floor with, therefore, a formidable drop into the area below.

Lord Dunraven and his friend passed from room A into room B, leaving Home in the former. He

had gone to sleep, or, as he afterwards described it, "had fallen into a trance."

While Dunraven and friend were seated in B, discussing the pros and cons of spiritualism, his Lordship's attitude towards it being that of "philosophic doubt," a tapping was heard at the window, and turning towards it, they, to their amazement and horror,—for the result of a slip, on so small a space for standing securely as the ledge afforded, would have been fatal,—perceived Home erect on the ledge. Lord Dunraven opened the window, and Home entered. He still appeared to be in a trance, and his action was that of a man walking in his sleep. He sat down; and very gradually awoke.

Such is the plain unvarnished tale, for the truth of which Lord Dunraven vouched, though, he added, that he committed himself to no sort of opinion as to means whereby this phenomenon was produced. If Home's aerial flight had an object, that object must have been primarily to gain over entirely to his side this philosophic nobleman, whose support would have been of the greatest value to him socially, and therefore financially. In this object he failed. Lord Dunraven was puzzled: that was all. But how did Home contrive to open one window and at the risk of his life jump, for it was more than a mere step could have accomplished, from one ledge, on which he scarcely had a footing, to another that afforded him

no greater rest for the sole of his foot, and all this without anything whatever to cling to? I have never heard it explained; and, personally, I find it impossible to explain on any ordinary *un-supernatural* hypothesis.

CHAPTER XXV

A NIGHT WI THE SPEERITS—MRS. MARSHALL
— E. L. BLANCHARD — THE UNEXPECTED
HAPPENS—THE PROFESSIONAL MEDIUM—A
CURIOS STORY—SHIRLEY BROOKS, DETEC-
TIVE—THE MILL HILL AND HENDON MYSTERY
—NARROW ESCAPE—WATCHED—TRAPPED—
DENOUNCED — ESCAPED — SATISFACTORY
TERMINATION

WHILE on the subject of spiritualism that occupied the preceding chapter, it occurs to me that Edward Laman Blanchard, the "hero of a hundred pantomimes," dramatic critic, writer of amusing lyrics, and *raconteur* of any number of good and interesting theatrical stories, was also spiritually inclined. One evening he took me to a *séance* at Mrs. Marshall's, at that time a well-known professional medium in lodgings over a music-shop somewhere in the neighbourhood of Soho. It was not a *séance* arranged for beforehand, but was just an evening visit on the part of E. L. Blanchard, who evidently took the middle-aged lady quite by surprise, at least apparently so, as she received him with—

"Lor', Mr. Blanchard, 'ooever would ha' thought o' seein' *you* 'ere this evening!"

Then we sat down and chatted. I was introduced as an inquirer, and after a cup of tea, Mrs. Marshall was induced to give us "a sitting." I forget exactly what happened, as it was rather a dull affair. The only thing that impressed me at all was something for which I could not in any way account satisfactorily.

It is usual, in Confirmation, for Catholics to take some saints' names, in addition to those bestowed on them in baptism. Now, of these I possess two that I have never used in any way, neither in signature nor in conversation.

During our *séance*, a spirit, so Mrs. Marshall informed us, wanted to speak to *me*. I gave it full permission to do so, without further introduction, not wishing to stand on any unnecessary ceremony; and I professed myself very delighted to hear from the spirit, whoever it was. I regret my inability to recall the individuality of this particular spirit. I have an indistinct recollection of its having been announced as my mother or sister. What I do remember is, my curiosity to ascertain if the spirit knew my Christian names, as, of course, if it were either of the two whom it professed to be, it would be familiar with them,—a "familiar" spirit. Blanchard was much interested, and Mrs. Marshall begged the spirit to be kind enough to rap out the letters spelling

my Christian names. The rap began by giving "F," and finding that was all right, went on spelling "Francis." Now, my next initial, "C," I thought, would be a puzzler. But it wasn't, and "Cowley" was duly spelt by raps that stopped us at the required letters as we went through the alphabet on paper. Blanchard was pleased; Mrs. Marshall ditto; and I was a bit perplexed, though thinking it over quietly, it occurred to me that Blanchard might have known these names, that they had been published more than once in full, and that as by that date my name was pretty well known in theatrical circles, Mrs. Marshall might have received a casual intimation from Blanchard that perhaps one night he would look in and bring me for a *seance*, and that thereupon she had looked me up in some contemporary record and had mastered the little there was to be learned on the subject. So there would have been an end of the matter, but for the rappings being persistent. Mrs. Marshall was surprised. Blanchard couldn't "make it out at all," like Daniel in the prize poem competition for the Newdigate, where it is recounted how—

"The King and courtiers by the sight appalled,
Begged to suggest that Daniel should be called;
When Daniel saw the writing on the wall,
At first he couldn't make it out at all."

So Mrs. Marshall too was clearly at fault. "Did their rappings apply to this gentleman," she asked,

meaning me. "Yes," was the answer returned by two emphatic raps. They had been asked to give my Christian names and they hadn't completed the list to their satisfaction.

"Is this so?" inquired Mrs. Marshall, turning to me for an explanation.

I was bothered. "No; as far as I knew, their list was complete. My names were undoubtedly 'Francis' and 'Cowley.'"

"No others?" asked Mrs. Marshall suspiciously.

"Yes—by jingo!" I exclaimed, "I had forgotten! Yes, there *were* others."

"Shall the spirits spell them for you?"

I acquiesced. "Certainly. By all means."

Blanchard was utterly taken aback. "I didn't know you had any other names," he muttered. And as it seemed to me in this he gave himself away, and the medium too. I had recalled suddenly that I possessed two Confirmation names. But this I did not mention, not thinking that either Blanchard or Mrs. Marshall would understand the distinction.

The spirit rapped out "C."

"We've had that before," observed Mrs. Marshall, taking the spirit to task rather snappishly.

But the next letter, instead of being the "o" of "Cowley," was "h," and the next was "a," followed by "r l e s."

"Charles!" exclaimed Blanchard. "I never heard you called 'Charles'!"

The spirit went on in the most business - like manner—

“ ‘Twas theirs to speak and ours to hear.”

And it began with “ P,” and after spelling Paul, went on without a pause to rap out “ Mary.” The names being, in effect, connected by a hyphen. The three Confirmation names then were “ Charles Paul-Mary,” a fact I had recalled only a few moments before, and which, up to then, had entirely slipped out of my memory.

It was, as far as I can see, highly improbable, if not absolutely impossible, that Mrs. Marshall should have been acquainted with these names of mine ; and I am convinced that Blanchard was entirely ignorant of the fact. I forget if I subsequently received a message from anyone ; if I did, it was of no importance. I rather think the spirit of Frank Talfourd sent a polite message to me through Blanchard. And yet, *cui bono*, the revelation of the names going to the credit of the invisible witness, when beyond this it had nothing to say to me of a private and personal character ?

I do not care to inquire too curiously ; I never visited Mrs. Marshall again ; I think we gave her half a sovereign between us for her trouble, and she did not “ decline it with thanks.” I am convinced that Blanchard was considerably puzzled, and I fancy that after this unexpected experience he paid less attention to the spiritual, and gave up more of his time to the

material world. If so, the spirits, on this occasion, as in Dickens's Christmas story, did good without, perhaps, intending it ; and I, who had gone there "to scoff," came away "to pray" against all spirits of evil, and to determine that never, except for detection of serious frauds, or for mere nonsensical amusement, would I have any further communications with disembodied souls that upset weak-kneed persons as easily as they did chairs and tables.

One more story on this subject, and I dismiss it from my reminiscences.

A professional medium appeared about this time, but, I think, a little later than Mr. Home, as to whose name I am uncertain, but fancy it was something like Anderson, and by permission of all the Andersons in the world, from "John Anderson, my Jo, John," down to the present day, I will at all events so dub this "professional" who is the principal character in my short spirit-story.

Shirley Brooks and myself were invited to a *séance* at the house of a mutual friend where we were to meet Mr. Anderson. There was a large party. On arriving, we gave our coats and hats to a spry-looking maid, with whom Shirley, who was "a merry man," amiably stopped to converse. Noticing that a number of overcoats and ladies' cloaks were already stowed away, and foreseeing some difficulty in claiming our own again when we should be leaving, Shirley presented the *soubrette* with a

silver token, and requested her to put his coat and mine somewhere apart from the others. The maid, with alacrity, undertook to do so, saying, there was a little back room where she would bestow them. She suited the word to the deed, disappeared, returned without the encumbrances, and then we mounted to the drawing-room, to find a large gathering awaiting the arrival of the Seer.

In about half an hour's time Anderson appeared ; not the wizard of that name, once celebrated as "The Wizard of the North," who became, for a while, lessee of Drury Lane Theatre, and finished his lease with a bal-masqué and a conflagration,—this *par parenthèse*,—but, Anderson the latest, *then*, from America, with a wonderful mediumistic reputation. Rather long brownish-greyish hair, intelligent face, slight figure, pleasant manner, and probably in the prime of life ; so pleasant was he indeed, that to a knowing person, not on the blind side of him, it was quite imaginable he "could wink the other eye."

To come to Hecuba : the feature of this evening was the *séance*. There were all sorts of manifestations : dark *séance* and light *séance* ; light *séance* and dark. Some became wearied, and went down for refreshments ; some left ; but we, Shirley and self, stayed on. And we were repaid.

A spirit was announced as wishing to give a message to the lady of the house. The message was trivial, as it appeared to me, but it evidently

affected our host and hostess, the former of whom, a thorough believer in spiritualism, asked if the spirit were present who gave this message, or if he were only a spirit-messenger sent by someone else? No; it seemed to be the genuine article. Good; then, if so, would he appear in his actual body, or whatever the term is. The spirit could not, for reasons, do this, but he would and could manifest himself to the vision of Mr. Anderson, through whom (though not all of us could see through him) his personality would be made evident to the earnest inquirers, who, perhaps, might be permitted to actually see him; if not, at all events, they would "hear from him." The master of the house, prompted thereto by his believing wife, pressed the medium to describe the person whom he professed at that moment to see.

Anderson paused—shivered—gazed—and then said at intervals—"soldierly-looking man—elderly—in uniform—but the lines are not clear." Everyone was following him with the utmost attention. The host and hostess were painfully interested. Anderson continued, "He looks grave . . . but happy . . . he points to his side . . . and . . ." here he was interrupted by some rapping on the table, when the word "India" was spelt out, then "heart, battle," and finally "We shall meet. I am happy."

Our hostess collapsed; her husband attended to her, and after a few more messages from some rather feeble spirits, and a few crooked answers to straight-

forward questions, Anderson terminated the *séance*, and we all trooped down in sections to supper. As the hostess did not reappear, and as Anderson left, having another engagement elsewhere, the guests reluctantly hurried over their supper, and we, Shirley and myself, had a short talk with the host, who explained that the spirit who had sent the message was that of his wife's father, long since dead but the particulars of whose death they had never rightly ascertained. This message was interpreted by them to mean that "in battle he had been shot through the heart," thus confirming the vague report they had received at the time. "It was," he said, "a great relief to his wife to learn that death had been instantaneous, and that he had passed from this world to a happier life." He begged Shirley, as one of his oldest friends, to excuse him for leaving the guests, and hoped we would remain as long as we could do justice to the supper. Then he retired, and we stayed until quite the last (we *could* sup in those days, at least *I* could fearlessly, but Shirley not without qualms concerning gout), being waited upon to our great content by the trim handmaiden on whom Shirley had previously bestowed *largesse*.

"Queer! the whole thing," quoth Shirley, sniffing as was his wont, and pulling out his cigar-case.

"Very," I replied, awaiting further expression of

my learned senior's opinion, and accepting with thanks one of his cigars.

"Not strong?" I inquired, alluding to the tobacco.

"No, just suited to a spiritualistic *séance*," he replied, "medium."

"I can call spirits from the vasty deep," Shirley continued, emphasising the personal pronoun. "I can," he repeated. "And there's a good deal of the 'I'—only spelt differently—in this hanky-panky, eh? Let's get our coats. Where's our light comedy maiden?"

She was here. "Oh yes," she recollects; "of course, I put your things in the little room apart, with the other gentleman's who came late. I'll get a light."

We followed her. In a little room at the back, used evidently for odds and ends, and for ornaments and furniture as yet unplaced, she had placed our hats and coats.

"Here they are," she said cheerfully. "I was afraid at first as the other gentleman might have taken one by mistake."

"The other gentleman?" Shirley asked.

"Yes," quoth the chatty maiden, "the last as came."

"Oh, Mr. Anderson, you mean," quoth Shirley.

"Yes, sir," acquiesced the young woman, "he's

an amusing gentleman; he was admiring all this lumber here, and asked quite a lot o' things."

"And," said Shirley, giving me a sly nudge as he stood staring up at a three-quarter length portrait of an officer in full uniform, "did he admire *that*?"

"Oh, indeed, sir, yes," she replied; "you know who it is, sir, p'raps?"

"Well," said Shirley, "I think I do. It is your mistress's father, General"—here he gave the name—"who was killed in India about a year or more ago."

"Ah," returned the maid, "I see you know the story. But that gentleman didn't, and he appeared so interested when I told him how much my mistress had taken it to heart, and how this had only been done just before he went out. It's down here because it's waiting to be packed and go to the cleaners and framers before it's hung up in its proper place in the dining-room. They ought to ha' come for it yesterday."

"*How lucky for Anderson they didn't,*" whispered Shirley to me as we followed the maid to the front door, and bade her good-night.

"Lor', what a simple thing conjuring is when you only know how to do the trick!" exclaimed Shirley. "The artful chap had tipped that girl, as *we* had, by the way, but he got value for his money, full information, or, at all events, just the right tip at the right time. Tip for tip. I *am* glad we stopped to finish the supper."

"And that you tipped the maid," I added.

"Quite so," he rejoined; "depend upon it Thackeray was right when he said that a tip is never thrown away on a servant or a schoolboy. That's my tip to *you*, young man. *Bon soir!*"

We had come to the parting of the ways; he to Regent's Park and I to the Bedford Hotel, Covent Garden, which was occasionally my *pied à terre* when staying in town.

The mention of the dear, comfortable, old-fashioned Bedford Hotel, Covent Garden, of which Mrs. Warner, sister-in-law to Mark Lemon, was proprietress, reminds me that here for many years, during the summer holiday, our *Punch* Wednesday dinners were held, as at that season, only a few of the staff remaining in town, our gathering was necessarily small, being, indeed, on one occasion reduced to, if I rightly remember, three,—Mark, Shirley, the constant Percival Leigh, and myself. It was here that when living in the country I used to put up on a Wednesday night when, after our Cabinet Council in Bouverie Street, I was too late for my train. In the summer-time it was pleasant to drive up to town in the morning, put up at the Langham stables, and drive down again after dinner, as I always preferred sleeping and waking, with the early birds, in the country.

To Hale Lodge, prettily situated in the lanes about Edgware and Mill Hill,—a locality then

innocent of builders,—with a famous garden and wonderful old fruit trees (there were four mulberry trees and a good orchard), we, a considerable family party, moved from Belgrave Road; and there we settled for many years. Now “hereby,” in conjunction with Bedford Hotel, Covent Garden, “hangs a tale.” Quite a sensational, unpleasantly sensational, episode in my generally uneventful career.

Suffering much from *eczema*, I had consulted the well-known specialist Erasmus Wilson, and he had ordered me away to undergo the cure at Aix-la-Chapelle, otherwise *Aachen*. *En passant*, I may say that this was a pilgrimage I had to make more than once, and, consequently, I am an expert in the “course” pursued at most of the sulphureous springs at home and abroad. For one doesn’t become “a perfect cure” all at once: no nor all at twice, nor at thrice either. And thus it happened that for some little time after my return home, having a slight recurrence of the “rash intruder,” I had to wear my right arm in a sling.

At this time we had a governess, of about twenty-eight years of age, attending our children. She was—well, just what a governess for young children ought to be, and in every sense satisfactory. A few days after my return she had leave of absence to visit some friends in town, and was to have come back, so my wife afterwards informed me, by the same train that brought me from London. I had

not seen her at the station, and I was the only person who descended at Mill Hill, where the trap awaited me. On arriving, my wife asked me if I had seen our governess at the station. We waited her coming for some time, as possibly she might have travelled by the other line, which terminated at Edgware. However, she did not arrive, and the house was closed for the night.

Early next morning we heard that a young lady had been found, lying insensible, on the line, and had been conveyed to some hospital in London. It never occurred to us that this could possibly have been our governess. But we were apprised of the fact by receiving a paper the next day with a paragraph marked, "Mysterious Affair," giving only the fact of a young lady having been found on the line in an unconscious state, who had been taken to an hospital, but had been unable to answer any questions. Her appearance was described, and the initials on her pocket-handkerchief were given. She had been identified by some porter as having entered the train, which was a slow one, at one of the small stations just out of London, and her second-class ticket for Mill Hill was found in her pocket.

I at once inquired for further information, but none could be immediately given. We then communicated with the relations whom she had gone up to visit, and whose address we knew. To this we had a cryptographic reply, which was of a rather

threatening character, and it intimated that her father, or uncle, would call upon me.

Strangely enough in the leading papers, such as *The Times* and *Telegraph*, I came across no allusion to the accident. Another letter, from her father this time, informed us that his daughter was still in the hospital, in a very precarious state, and that the affair was in the hands of the police.

In the course of ten days came a letter from Shirley Brooks urging me strongly to come up to town, visit the Garrick, and put myself *en évidence*. On receipt of this, after taking counsel with my wife, I determined to go up to town and stay at the Bedford, though the state of my arm necessitating most careful dressing, would have been sufficient excuse for my remaining at home. Another letter strongly urging me to show myself at the Garrick Club and so stop the gossip, decided me. Before I started, the post brought a "latest edition," and therein I read how this lady, now dying in hospital, had been visited by a justice of the peace, and had been able to answer questions as to how she had fallen on the line. Unfortunately, as she evidently (this was admitted) with difficulty understood the purport of the interrogations, she was instructed by these clever representatives of Dogberry, Verges, Master Shallow, and Co., to answer "Yes" or "No" to the questions, which were necessarily all leading ones. From her evidence, thus obtained,

"I suppose," I observed, "you attributed that damage to our struggle in the carriage?"

"Lor' bless you no, Mr. Burnand," was the cheery reply. "That was just the very thing which settled the matter in our minds; wasn't it?" he asked his partner.

"Not a doubt of it," was that gentleman's emphatic corroboration.

"Because you see if you had been hurt," went on the principal detective, "the last thing you'd have done would have been, so to speak, to advertise the fact. Still, we were bound to keep our eye on you, and we're bound to make this call. But I think, as the young lady is recovering, when she's quite come to her senses, she'll give rather a different version of the affair."

We sat and chatted, and I gave them a treat by baring my arm and putting the *eczema* with its ointments and bandages in evidence, and telling them who my doctor was, and how that eminent practitioner, whose testimony would be above suspicion, could corroborate this part of the story. Then I inquired, "Did you think it likely that, travelling as I was in a first-class compartment, I should have incurred the extraordinary risk of creeping along the footboard to the second-class which was either some way before or behind?"

"It wasn't likely, of course," assented the principal detective; "but queer things do happen, and highly

improbable ones too. But that you should have come out as an acrobat, nipped into a second-class carriage, had this struggle, and then got back again to your own, and descended at Mill Hill all safe and sound—we impounded your ticket as part of the case for the prosecution—was what neither me nor my mate credited for one moment."

This was as much as could be said. I regaled my visitors with light and suitable refreshment, and over a couple of cigars they chatted pleasantly enough, telling me some amusing tales of their own professional experience. Then they asked me if by any chance I could favour them with a couple of "orders" for any theatre; and as I was able to gratify their theatrical tastes, I gave them the tickets, and with many sincere protestations as to the obligation put on them of "doing their duty," and after delivering themselves of prophecies as to the certainty of everything being cleared up in my favour, they took their leave.

At once I wrote to my wife, then to Shirley and other friends, and on the following day the "Hendon Mystery, or the Mysterious Affair at Mill Hill," was explained by the newspapers, and ceased to be food for penny-a-liners and club gossips.

Our unfortunate governess on completely regaining her faculties was horrified at learning the charge she had brought against me.

Her depositions were read over to her; her signature shown her; for neither could she account.

The plain unvarnished story was, that she had indeed come by the train in which I was travelling; that she had been put into the carriage by her sister, and that the sleepy porter had not taken care to see the door properly fastened. It was a dark night; she was unfamiliar with the line, and leaning out to ascertain whether they were approaching a station she knew, she must have given the half-turned handle just the impetus required to open the door, which thereupon swung back, and out she tumbled. A wonderful escape—for both of us!

Then she wrote to us a distracted letter, and her father called to offer personally his extreme regret. We were delighted to be able to congratulate him on his daughter's recovery, and in the course of a few months, when she was quite herself again, I believe we were able to assist her in obtaining another situation. Such was the "Hendon and Mill Hill Mystery." Rather a shock for a young man not much over twenty-eight, for that was my age as far as I can make out by comparing dates.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE ROYALTY — HENDERSON — LIVERPOOL —
FRANK MUSGRAVE — NEW DEPARTURE —
ENGLISH *OPÉRA BOUFFE* — FARNIE — HONOUR
AMONGST GENTLEMEN — J. S. CLARKE — AT
EDGWARE — ARTHUR SKETCHLEY — GEORGE
ROSE — COLLABORATION — SOTHERN — A MIS-
TAKE — *THE HEADLESS MAN* — THE TRUE
STORY OF *THE COLONEL* — HOW IT FAILED
AT REHEARSAL — HAYMARKET TRIAL TRIP —
REMARKABLE SUCCESS AT PRINCE OF WALES'
— AT ABERGELDIE CASTLE — BY ROYAL COM-
MAND — *BLUE BEARD* — *ARIEL* — COLONEL
COLLETTE — HARKING BACK — A REVELATION
— FREDDY CLAY COMMUNICATIVE — THE
RESULT

IT was through my pieces at the Royalty that I became acquainted with Alexander Henderson, then lessee of the Prince of Wales Theatre, Liverpool. He was an "odd mixture," partly horse-dealer, partly theatrical manager, Scotch by birth, Australian for a considerable portion of his life; 'cute and "as hard as nails" in business, kind when dealing with members of his theatrical company, and with a *côte faible*, most decidedly *faible*, when

"woman, lovely woman," was concerned; with the emphasis on the "lovely." It would be a great stretch of imagination to assert that he ever came off second best in a bargain until he fell in with Mr. Farnie, a clever adapter of light French *opéras bouffes*. This style of entertainment very soon superseded burlesque at the Strand Theatre, where Mons. Marius and Florence St. John, with Edward Terry for low comedian, were the attractions. Henderson had got the Swanborough Family, then the proprietors of the Strand, well in hand, and he and Farnie, in effect, "ran that show," and ran it with success. It was quite in keeping with the theory of legitimate development of theatrical tastes that this class of entertainment should follow and grow out of what H. J. Byron had begun, what I had continued, what Frank Musgrave, conductor, indifferent musician, but uncommonly clever caterer for the public, in conjunction with myself, had hit upon, when, under the Swanborough *régime*, we, collaborating, produced operatic burlesque pieces, such as *Windsor Castle*, with Musgrave's original music. Frank Musgrave had no education, musical or otherwise, but he could turn out a catchy popular tune, could score it sufficiently well for a small orchestra, had a keen sense of humour, and was a first-rate stage-manager. *Windsor Castle* was a great success, David James being inimitable as the jester; Miss Raynham, one of the best "boys" ever seen on the stage, capital as

the youthful Henry VIII.; Tom Thorne, delightful as Anne Boleyn, with an imitation French song (burlesquing those much in vogue at the time); and Fenton played the pantomime part of Herne the Hunter, after the manner of the late Mr. George Conquest, who used to disappear suddenly down traps and reappear as suddenly up traps, be shot several feet up in the air, always arriving on his feet, with an energy and indiscretion that left nothing to be desired. Undoubtedly with Frank Musgrave (who was succeeded by another sharp little conductor and composer, Fitzgerald) English *opéra bouffe*, superseding burlesque, was started by me at this theatre, where subsequently Henderson and Farnie took it up; Edward Terry being the only one of the old company remaining (for James and Thorne had gone into partnership at the Vaudeville Theatre) as the principal *comique* in the novel entertainment, which, French in its origin, soon became firmly established at this little house. From here it spread itself out to Henderson's little theatre in King William Street, subsequently Toole's, which, having served at one time as a hall for Woodin's entertainments, at another as a wine office, and also as the first Oratorian chapel in London, has now disappeared altogether.

Farnie exactly suited Henderson. They were both Scotch, Farnie's accent being as broad as was his habitual way of expressing himself. He was a burly swaggerer, his coarse manner having developed

itself, *pari passu*, with his rise in the world. He came into the work just at the psychological moment when theatrical business affairs were on the turn, and when the new men, if as sharp and business-like as was Farnie,—he was son of a Scotch factor, and obtained his first start in life through his father's employer, who told me this himself, prefacing his information by inquiring if I happened to know "Young Farnie,"—could make terms at which our predecessors Planché, Sterling Coyne, the Brothers Brough, Tom Taylor, Maddison Morton, Bayle Bernard, and others would have been utterly amazed.

So Farnie became Henderson's right-hand man, with access to the right pocket. It was diamond cut diamond, but Farnie was free and easy, and Henderson was neither the one nor the other; and so it chanced that when Farnie and Henderson quarrelled, which happened about three times a year, Henderson was the first to hold out the hand of fellowship, and as quickly as possible, as otherwise he felt himself helpless; while Farnie, a clever stage-manager, and being, as composer and author, "in" with the music publishers and also a power with musical and dramatic artists, could do for himself what Henderson could not achieve without him. Not that Alexander Henderson did not try to shake himself free of Farnie; but though a man could have been found able to do all that Farnie could, yet

Henderson failed to find one who was ready and willing to do all that Farnie did. By the way, I think it was H. J. Byron who on being asked "What is Farnie doing now?" replied readily, "Doing? Oh —Henderson." So after many attempts at obtaining any confidential agent who should be all to him that Farnie had been, Alexander Henderson used to give up the struggle, and once again would be seen the touching spectacle of these two walking together and enjoying each other's society as if there had never been the slightest suspicion of a difficulty between them.

How I have heard Henderson abuse Farnie, and how within two days afterwards I have heard him lavish in his praises of him!

"When thieves fall out," etc.—"the proverb is somewhat musty." But note the present application of it.

I received an anonymous letter at the Garrick Club from "a friend who did not wish to see me robbed à mon insu," bidding me compare the version of an *opéra bouffe* by Farnie, then appearing at the Prince of Wales Theatre, Liverpool, with an extravaganza of mine (published) that had been performed in London a year or two before. To particularise the piece is now unessential to the issue. Some pages of Farnie's extravaganza, privately printed for the theatre, were enclosed, and at Lacy's in the Strand I procured a copy of my own

burlesque. In those days I did not mistrust or look askance at anonymous correspondence; to receive such a note was for me a novelty. I read it and acted upon it. The next step I took was “to consult a solicitor” (old George Lewis—I think it was, the father, or uncle, of the present Baronet, who was then permanent solicitor to the Dramatic Authors’ Society until, on his retirement, he was replaced by Mr. T. H. Bolton, who retained the office until the Society dissolved itself), by whom I was advised in the first instance to ascertain the facts from Henderson, and if he afforded me no assistance, then to “go for” H. B. Farnie, who had simply taken handfuls out of my piece and inserted them *verbatim* in his extravaganza, *opéra bouffe*, or whatever he called it.

So an appointment with Henderson was made and kept. It happened to be at a season of the year when Henderson and Farnie were at daggers drawn. Henderson took a high moral tone about the matter (his acting was a perfect bit of comedy), and promised that Farnie, who had made money by the production at Henderson’s theatre (where Henderson had evidently not made as much as he had expected, even if he had not been a loser), should hand over to me at least a hundred pounds, which he considered (judicially speaking) might fairly represent the sum in which Farnie would have been “cast in damages.”

So in the strangers’ smoking-room of the Garrick

Club on the following day Henderson turned up, bringing his Farnie with him.

Farnie in broad Scotch accent said he was glad to make my acquaintance, paid a compliment (not overdone) to the work of which he had already given his genuine opinion by prigging from it for his own use, avowing himself quite ready to pay up a hundred pounds, as a fine, and to cancel the lines in his piece.

I accepted his offer if, that is to say, he was prepared to pay up at once, when I would give him a receipt.

“Quite ready,” he said, and sitting down he drew up the agreement, according to the terms aforesaid. I perused the document, and was ready to sign on receiving the cheque.

Henderson had a cheque-book in his pocket.

“We bank at the same place,” quoth Farnie, “and, by the bye, Henderson, you owe me a hundred pounds.”

A dispute followed on this. It terminated, however, on their giving me two cheques for fifty each, one signed by Farnie and the other by Henderson. So we parted ; or rather, so *they* “parted,” and I left them. Henderson was delighted at having brought Farnie to book ; Farnie also was pleased at having made Henderson share the loss, as, if it hadn’t been for their quarrel, I should never have heard a word about the matter ; and I was comparatively satisfied, being in considerable doubt as to whether I had not

let both of them off far too easily. I say "both," because Henderson had known all about it from the first, and had turned king's evidence; while Farnie would have implicated Henderson in it still further, and would have had the fine increased and borne by Henderson, *perhaps exclusively*, if the latter had refused to pay half the amount of damages claimed. The fact is that I ought to have received a fair proportion of the profits, which were on the percentage scale, and, as I subsequently ascertained, five hundred would have been nearer the mark than one, as I could have rightly and justly claimed my due as "part-author."

However as to me it was a hundred pounds *& surprise*, I pocketed the cheque and let the subject drop. Of course the anonymous letter to me came from Henderson.

It is just possible that Henderson might have had to pay it all, and that in law Farnie might have had his action against him. For Farnie might have prigged from my piece in utter ignorance; Henderson might have had the lines written out and given to him to be introduced, representing them as written by someone in whom he had an interest.

That this is not so very improbable I may instance from the case of Mr. John Sleeper Clarke, the eccentric, but somewhat monotonous, American comedian, and myself. I undertook to write him a piece on the lines of a plot which he suggested. The

plot, he said, was his own idea and the bits of dialogue for certain situations were, he said, also his own invention. To these situations of his, illustrated by (as he professed) *his* dialogue, I worked up loyally, though as I went on I liked the job less and less. The piece on production was a failure, the only scene in it which was a success being one between three men, Coghlan, William Farren, and John Clayton, so well played as to merit the recall of the three comedians; and this scene was purely my own invention, the dialogue my own writing. All the other scenes with J. S. Clarke in them went for nothing.

More than one criticism on it pointed out that I had boldly plagiarised from a not very old comedy called *The Knights of the Round Table*. Before I denied this charge I bought the book. I found that *all the situations and such scraps of dialogue with which Mr. John Sleeper Clarke had furnished me were actually in this play!*

I went to Clarke; he didn't deny it; he "thought I knew it," he said. Then I "wrote to the papers" (a very unsatisfactory performance in any case), and got into some further thankless correspondence with the *Times* and its dramatic critic, and then nothing more was heard of the play. Nobody lost over it except, I suppose, Clarke (though I am not so sure about this) and myself. So to hark back to Henderson and Farnie, the former might have played

Clarke to Farnie's "myself," and I should have been in error had I blamed Farnie instead of Henderson.

Our little house at Edgware being easy of access from town by rail or road (there is no river, hence the drawback of that situation), was visited by "troops of friends," literary, professional, and unprofessional, and among them the figure of one especially remains in my mind's eye, namely, that of George Rose, known to the world at large as "Arthur Sketchley," author of *Mrs. Brown*. He was rather under than over the average height, but very stout, and as he grew older he became more and more corpulent. Once he attempted Falstaff, but in this character he was not within measurable distance (round the waist) of Mark Lemon, who had appeared in it years before. Strange to say that though both men were, in their different lines, full of humour, rollicking in their fun and drollery, and both possessed of the strongest appreciation of wit in others (in this direction Mark Lemon was by far the more generously disposed, in consequence probably of his long experience as editor of *Punch*), yet when they donned the clothes, padding, and make-up of the fat knight, both of them became the pitiable personifications of good men struggling with adversity. Mark as Falstaff was in size and manner considerably superior to George Rose, but, like George Rose, when with his war paint on, all those qualities, for which a critic would have specially

selected him to personify Falstaff, almost entirely disappeared. Mark dressed the part perfectly, after Sir John Tenniel's delightful and most accurately devised picture. George Rose dressed Falstaff just as suited the costumier's fancy, and the consequence was, that, attired in brightish colours and a ruff, his appearance suggested that of an obese Punchinello *minus* the hump. Mark started his performance at the Gallery of Illustration in Waterloo Place, and then went "on tour" with his small company (among whom was at first Linley Sambourne, if I remember rightly) in the provinces; but George Rose, many years after, as I have said, made his one and only trial trip at the Olympic Theatre at a matinée, and then, as Falstaff, he was "heard no more," his "brief candle" (as I might have said of my own distinguished appearance at the bar) having gone out with a sputter.

As an entertainer in one particular line, that is when narrating the adventures and giving supposed imitations of the style of "Mrs. Brown" (who was an article manufactured out of Sheridan's *Mrs. Malaprop*, Dickens's *Mrs. Gamp*, and Hook's *Mrs. Rambotham*), he was most amusing, made a great success and a fair amount of money. But off that platform he was of little use as a public entertainer. In private life George Rose was delightful, full of anecdote, ready with appreciation, with strong likes and dislikes, and an excellent companion. Besides this he was a

thoroughly good man, without any affectation of piety, liberal, generous, and a most hearty, not to say devoted, Catholic. He had begun life as an evangelical (he was of Scotch origin), but Oxford was responsible for making him a Newmanite (he was too hard-headed and logical to have ever been, or to have remained, a Puseyite), and after a brief career as an Anglican clergyman in London,—he was, as Mr. W. S. Gilbert says, “a pale young curate then,”—he was received into the Catholic Church by Cardinal, then Dr., Manning. And this, by the way, was the only experience George Rose ever had of the Cardinal, as within a week after his becoming a Catholic he called on Dr. Manning, who, aware that George Rose as a “convertite” had given up his Anglican curacy, “the means by which he lived” (for his own income was as slender as was his own figure at that period when development had only shown itself spiritually and not corporeally), at once suggested to him that he should proceed to Rome, study for the priesthood, be ordained, and enter upon clerical work wherever he might be sent “on the mission.” This did not suit George at all; he had made one mistake in becoming an Anglican parson, and he was not going to make the still more fatal one (that is, fatal to any person without a vocation,—“*not called as was Aaron*”) of becoming a Catholic priest. Therefore he firmly but respectfully declined Dr. Manning’s offer; and Dr. Manning,

whose hobby it was that any convert who had been an Anglican clergyman should therefore become a Catholic priest, was rather chagrined by the refusal, and, figuratively speaking, washed his hands of any further interference in George Rose's affairs.

So George began to look about him, and then his Oxford training stood him in good stead, and he obtained the appointment of tutor to Lord Arundel, the present Duke of Norfolk. Here he remained for some years, and had no better friend than the late Duke. George Rose was greatly in favour of letting the young Duke go to Eton in company with some other Catholic noblemen of his own age ; but though this idea—it never developed into a plan, much less a scheme—was regarded favourably by no less a person than John Henry Newman, D.D. (not then promoted to the rank of Cardinal), yet it was absolutely scouted by Henry Edward Manning, Archbishop of Westminster, in succession to Cardinal Wiseman, and certainly did not meet with the approval of the majority of the English Catholic ecclesiastical authorities, who took care so to represent the matter at headquarters that the notion of starting a Catholic house at Eton as a "Dame's House," such as was Tarver's, the French master's, Miss Myddleton's, Evans's, the drawing master's, and others, was entirely abandoned, and thus a rather attractive scheme, which, if carried out under certain religious safeguards, would have been for the social

advantage (I limit the advantage to "social") of English Catholics, fell to the ground. The Reverend Father Faber expressed himself as unfavourable to this plan of education, and he was *de la première force* at that time in the counsels of the ducal house of Norfolk. It was amusing to hear poor George Rose on Manning and Faber. The little Lord Arundel's education was taken in hand by the Oratorians (I forget whether he went to Dr. Newman's at Edgbaston, which perhaps had not at that time been started as "the Catholic Eton"), and George Rose's occupation, so far, was gone. Up to the last both the old Duke and the present one were most friendly towards George Rose. As I have elsewhere said, George Rose became a constant visitor at the house of Charles Mathews, and was a great friend of Henry J. Byron, also of Clement Scott of the *Daily Telegraph*, who "alone remains" of that trio "to tell the tale." George Rose, away from his *Mrs. Brown*, never achieved anything worth mentioning. He started a paper which included W. S. Gilbert among its contributors. I fancy the paper was called *Mrs. Brown's Budget*, but it did not succeed, and indeed George himself, oddly enough, had a heavy method and an old-fashioned style when he once got a pen into his hand and worked alone. He was great fun as a *collaborateur*, and we had the pleasantest time possible when we wrote together a little musical sketch for the

Alhambra, and when he assisted me in developing an idea which I had conceived for a part for Sothern. And thereby hangs a tale.

I had hit upon a first-rate eccentric character. It was originated in some papers I was at that time writing for *Punch*. The idea for the hero of the comedy was "a man with a method"; a man who considered himself as so methodical that he was always lecturing others on the advantages of his own system as compared with *their* negligent way of doing business, while in reality there never was such a muddle-headed person as this monomaniac. Three characters in three other different pieces evidently started this idea. First, the part of *Messiter* in *A Nice Firm*, a piece (original I believe) by Tom Taylor; secondly, Bayle Bernard's *The Practical Man*, in both pieces I had played at Cambridge; thirdly, a Mr. Somebody in a one-act piece, the name of which I quite forget, nor do I think it was ever published, a part wonderfully played by Charles Mathews, of a man whose brains went wool-gathering and who could not be constant to one idea for three minutes at a stretch. From acquaintance with these sprang the notion of a "man with a method," triumphant in all his errors, while hopelessly embroiling himself and everybody who might come in contact with him in any affair of more or less importance. I had decided he was to be a solicitor; that he was to be a married man, and I had a vague idea of

various situations, and a very clear notion on the subject of dialogue and detail. But for the life of me I could not invent a plot. The character I had created was as the monster to *Frankenstein*. So when George Rose was staying with us at Hale Lodge I asked him if he could provide me with a plot. This he undertook to do most willingly. It began well ; it offered the required opportunities ; but I felt it was thin. However, we went to work, and I am bound to say the work was play. Many a pleasant summer morning we passed in my study at Hale Lodge composing this *Headless Man*, and always with a view to its performance by Charles Mathews. When, however, it neared completion, we expressed our doubts as to whether Mathews, then over seventy years of age, speaking not so distinctly as heretofore, but acting with all his old *verve* and charm, and playing in one or two new pieces too, could really *study* this part. We were afraid, very much afraid, that he could not. Unfortunately, as George Rose had excited Charles Mathews' curiosity by telling him a good deal about the piece, it seemed to me that, at least, we were bound to show it him. This we did, and he professed himself ready to play it at the very first opportunity. That opportunity never came, and after the death of Charles Mathews we determined that the next best person, with whom to place it, was Sothern, who had not had such a "character" part since the days of Dundreary. To

him we confided it. Sothern accepted it; said there was a lot to be done with it, and kept it for some considerable time. However, what will happen in "the affairs of mice and men" occurred here. I quarrelled with Sothern, or rather Sothern quarrelled with me, about no business affair whatever, but owing to a view I took of his conduct in a certain matter that really in no way concerned me and about which I might, without any loss of self-esteem, have been silent as far as he was personally concerned, seeing that my knowledge of the affair only came to me at second-hand. However, quixotically, I made a false step in refusing an invitation to dinner from Sothern, and, quite unnecessarily, stating the reason, in strong terms, for such refusal. The reply to this was the return of our *Headless Man*, and then I realised that my partner George Rose had suffered through *me*.

It appeared subsequently, however, that Sothern had retained his own private copy of the play, which, as I learned long afterwards, he confided to Charles Wyndham (then a rising light comedian who, since the days of *Black Eye'd Susan* and his famous dance on the Royalty boards, had forsaken burlesque), telling Charles Wyndham that he was at liberty to produce it, and pointing out how it could be advantageously altered and amended. Mistrusting the practical-joker Sothern and the story with which the play was introduced to him, Wyndham sagaciously kept it by him for some time, until Sothern, moved

by a good impulse, requested him not to do anything with it, but, if he fancied it, he was to communicate with the authors, whose names he then for the first time revealed. I liked Sothern very much ; he was most amusing, and we had passed many a pleasant time together. I think we both regretted the estrangement, and I say “both” advisedly, as one day going along Garrick Street I suddenly encountered Sothern. My quarrel with him had quite gone out of my memory, and that he had momentarily forgotten the rupture of friendly relations between us was evident from his advancing to me, with both his hands out, as I was approaching him in just the same attitude, our faces beaming with pleasure at the meeting.

“Hullo ! Sothern !” I exclaimed heartily.

“Hullo ! old fellow !” cried Sothern, with equal heartiness.

And then—a pause. The idea evidently struck us both at the same instant,—

“Why, we’re not on speaking terms !”

And he turned aside and entered the Garrick Club laughing, I am positive, as I turned and went my way, giving way to irrepressible mirth. The situation was of the best and truest comedy ; a real “comedy of errors.” And it was one which oddly enough existed in the very piece written for Mathews, passed on to him, and by him to Charles Wyndham, whose performance of the principal character has been

placed by good critics as one of the most artistic creations in his varied *répertoire*. The lack of female interest in the piece has, I fancy, militated against its popularity, yet it went for six weeks or so with roars of laughter, and was played "to excellent business," which suddenly dropped, and then the piece dropped too, having been only occasionally revived as a "stop-gap."

George Rose, known by his *nom de plume* of Arthur Sketchley, was never "on" *Punch*. The Sketchley on *Punch* was R. F. Sketchley, of the South Kensington Library, who was brought on to the staff in Mark Lemon's time, being then introduced by Tom Taylor; but Mrs. Brown's Sketchley never did anything for *Punch* until my editorship. He contributed regularly to *Fun*, where *Mrs. Brown* first appeared, but only occasionally, after Tom Hood (junior, of course) had ceased to conduct that paper.

I think I might head my next "reminiscence" with "*How the Colonel achieved Success: A Tale with a Moral for Dramatic Authors and Managers.*"

One morning to my study at our house in Russell Square came "B.," i.e. Bancroft, as Sir Squire Bancroft was then known among his intimates, with a suggestion for a comedy. He brought with him a copy of *The Serious Family*, by Bayle Bernard, and the original French play, *Un Mari à la Campagne*, from which the aforesaid B. B. had derived his English version.

"Of course," observed "B." with impressive solemnity, "this old stuff has long since past and gone. But I'm sure there's something in it, if you can only bring the piece 'up to date.' What can be substituted for the—er—the religious craze of that time which was then satirised?"

At the moment, and off-hand, I could not say, not being familiar with the original as played at the Haymarket many years before I had ever thought of getting my livelihood by "devoting myself" to dramatic literature. So I asked Bancroft to leave it with me and let me consider the matter, and in a very short time I would communicate to him the result.

When he repeated his visit I had the *scenario* of the play pretty well ship-shape. The leading idea that I had adopted was the æsthetic craze of that time, which George du Maurier had already pictorially satirised, and was still satirising in *Punch* with his well-known characters of *Maudle* and *Postlethwaite*. The "Maudles" and "Postlethwaites" had raised, or lowered, "æstheticism" to a "cult." Of course, it was very easy to perceive that it was only a matter of transferring the humbugs of an earlier period of the Victorian era to a later. *Tartufe* remains *Tartufe*, clothe him how you will. Bancroft was enthusiastically pleased with the idea; and the terms for the new comedy on the old lines were arranged.

When I had nearly finished the play, two acts of it were read at the Haymarket. The reception of the piece, so far, by the assembled company, was freezingly polite. The green-room was like a parrot house in chilly weather, where all the parrots "thought the more." While engaged on writing the third act, the first was put into rehearsal. Somehow it would *not* come out as we wished. Bancroft, as stage-manager, was most precise and emphatic, not a movement was lost, not a stage direction of the most microscopic character but received his most earnest attention. Attention to details—that way genius lies. And both Mr. and Mrs. Bancroft were as perfect in this respect as they were unrivalled in their separate "lines of business" on the stage.

But no—the piece was obstinately unsatisfactory. Then I put it (by request) into two acts, exerting considerable ingenuity to ensure its failure at rehearsal. After trying the piece and our patience alike, the Bancrofts decided that they would put it aside for further consideration, hoping, with Mr. Micawber, that, "something would turn up." And in the meantime I might do what I liked with the play.

I was considerably chagrined. But as luck would have it, the old Prince of Wales's Theatre, which the Bancrofts had "made," and which had made the Bancrofts (chiefly *per* Tom Robertson's plays to start with and then their own excellent discretion in management to carry on and finish with), had come into

the hands of Edgar Bruce and his partner, "Teddy" Claremont (with whose name, as connected with theatrical professional matters, I was entirely unacquainted), and to Edgar Bruce I sent, telling him I had a piece they could put on in three weeks. Bruce and Claremont called the next evening. I read the piece to them in its original form of three acts. After a brief consultation, during which, with delicate tact I quitted the room, they decided on trying it, and agreed to pay me so much percentage on the takings; an agreement of which the terms were far more beneficial to me than had been those on which the piece would have been played at the Haymarket. But I had B.'s free permission, as I have said, to do what I liked with it (the suggestion having originally come from *him*), as he laid no claim whatever to any rights in what he probably looked upon as an ultimate failure, whatever purpose it might temporarily serve. By the way, how it chanced that I ever thought of Edgar Bruce and Claremont I will reserve until the story of *The Colonel* is finished.

Then said Edgar Bruce and his partner as under a common inspiration, "Coghlan's our man for the Colonel." I agreed. I did not know much of Mr. Coghlan, but his playing in some of the Prince of Wales's pieces during the Bancroft management had attracted general and very favourable attention.

Then they went to work at the cast, and to their choice I gave in my adhesion from first to last.

Mr. Fernandez was to be the Arch-humbug, Miss Myra Holmes (now Mrs. Pinero) was to be the plastic wife (charmingly she played it), and Miss Amy Roselle (poor Amy Roselle, alas!) the gay and dashing widow.

Charles Coghlan coqueted with the offer, and stipulated that, before accepting the chief *rôle*, he must hear the play read. So we had another reading —a delightful one. Never was such an audience of three! Two enthusiastic, taking all the points (as knowing them beforehand), and “the third person present,” coming with an entirely “open mind,” showed himself a “third person singular.” The reading took place at night, between half-past eleven and two. Charles Coghlan wavered, but yielded reluctantly to the majority, and before he left he had agreed, pending certain conditions (of his own making) being accepted by the management, to play the part of “Colonel Woottweell Wood.”

The next day came a message to inform me that all was satisfactorily arranged. Coghlan was freed by the two managers from temporary financial difficulties, and could walk in and out of the theatre without having to face his fellow-man with a writ in his hand. Then followed the reading of the piece to a company all freezingly unemotional, except Miss Holmes and Mrs Leigh Murray. The parts had been all copied out, and we set to work in earnest rehearsing all day and every day, and finally,

when the theatre, which was doing uncommonly bad business, was closed, we called our rehearsals at night.

Oh, those rehearsals! I have had a considerable experience of this most interesting preparation for production, during which all concerned, but more especially the author, if he, single-handed, undertakes the "staging" of his piece, go through every phase of hope, satisfaction, and utter despair, culminating in the blankest ignorance as to what will be the probable result when the work, as a whole, comes before the public from whose judgment there is no court of final appeal. A most anxious time is it for everybody in any way connected with the piece if they all are as thoroughly "heart and soul in it" as necessarily must be the author. But when the company, instead of sharing his trouble, as part "bearers of the burden," are, if not absolutely against him, at least totally indifferent, then the strain is almost too much for that author to bear, unless he be in the prime of life with plucky determination and a store of good temper to carry him through. An author in these conditions—very, very rare I am glad to remember—must know his own mind, must be able to give a reason for every line, for every movement, and *must never attempt to rehearse a single scene of which he has not every detail of every situation at his finger-ends.*

I shall never forget Fernandez telling me with

grim courtesy that, "of course, he would carry out all my directions and would not venture to offer any suggestion of his own." Much the same said Coghlan. Charles Hawtrey¹ and his brother were too new to the stage and too glad to get an engagement to offer either assistance or opposition, and my only comforters were Mrs. Leigh Murray, Myra Holmes, and Amy Roselle, who really did their very best to make the rehearsals as pleasant as they possibly could be in the circumstances.

The piece was announced, and the last rehearsal on the night before production was almost heart-breaking, especially at the finish, when, for some reason or another (the fault here was entirely mine),

¹ Mr. Charles Hawtrey was not in *The Colonel* as originally cast, but his brother George was : the latter played the part of a footman. I well remember my astonishment when, on leaving the theatre after one of the first rehearsals, I was met on the steps by a stout young man with an elderly manner, accompanied by a tall, boyish-faced younger man, who, in a kind of pleasant duet, introduced themselves to me as the "Hawtrey Brothers from Eton," and reminded me of their father and uncle, who, in my time, when these unexpected visitors were very small boys in the lowest forms of existence were among those "that held rule over us" at Eton. Personally, as Stephen Hawtrey was, in my day, an "extra," teaching arithmetic and mathematics, and as John Hawtrey was a lower school master with an entirely lower school house set, I never came across either of them officially, and to me they were only names, although "familiar in my ears as household words." Charles Hawtrey never played *The Colonel*, but took the part of Forrester (*Le Mari à la Campagne*) on tour ; and all Charles did in the piece in London was to appear as the nice young man, the lover, originally played by Eric Bailey. This did "Charles, our friend" (and most people's), from September 1881 to the end of June 1882.

I could not for the life of me bring about the fall of the curtain with a genuine "snap" that, if the issue were at all doubtful, should secure a favourable verdict. The ending was ragged. And after trying several methods of finishing it, after wearying everyone of the whole thing, after so tiring some of the actors who lived at a distance from the theatre that they protested, if not allowed to go home, they could not come to read over the piece (by way a sort of very, very last "refresher") in the morning, much less could they play at night, I consented to the dismissal of everyone, and all were pledged to come at eleven the following morning, by which time I guaranteed that the last few lines would be ready. So we all went our several ways, and I retired to my study to sit up working at the manuscript until I could get just the very finish which, if there was to be any hesitation, would clinch the matter in favour of a verdict for the piece. It was then that "a happy thought" occurred to me. The old lady and her hypocritical adviser suddenly appear on the scene when her daughter and her husband are giving a dance. They are horrified at the waltzing. "What!" she exclaims. "Is this a rebellion?" "No," explains the Colonel, waving his hand to the time of the waltz; "it's a revolution."

That started the finish. A few lines, a little "business" [for the exit of the objectionable party of three, Streyke and his nephew with the old dowager],

and the evident happiness of the three couples who resume the waltz to the jubilant strains of the orchestra, brought down the curtain on a heartily acclaimed success. Not for a moment had it been in doubt, as I heard afterwards, although there were "friends in front" quite prepared to condemn it on account of its attack on sham æstheticism. But these favourers of the new heresy were in a minority, and to my astonishment the verdict was a genuinely popular one, obtained unexpectedly from the pit and gallery, who were enthusiastic. For my part I had spent a very, very anxious evening. I had dined at the *Punch* table (it was produced on a Wednesday), and arriving during the first act, I went up to Coghlan's room. He was on the stage ; nervously I inquired of his "dresser" how the piece was going, and the dresser gave me a half-hearted sort of answer. But at that moment I heard a burst of laughter, then another and another, and up rushed Coghlan for a pocket-handkerchief or something he had forgotten ; thank goodness it was not for any of his 'lines.' He was in a great state of excitement ; all his assumed *nonchalance* had vanished, and he shouted to me hurriedly, "It's all right, my boy! going first-rate ! If it only keeps up like this, it's a *big* success !" and down he went again. I remained in his room ; but not until Claremont and Bruce had come up to assure me that it was all right and "an enormous go," did I venture on to the stage, where, from the

prompt side, I witnessed the third act, and felt indescribably relieved when I had "taken my call," which was hearty and unanimous, specially from pit and gallery as aforesaid, and the curtain was down for the last time. Then came the hand-shaking; then came mutual congratulations all round: the author's thanks, the manager's delight, and the general contentment, with only one note of alarm to disturb our well-earned repose, and that was "Ah! but what will the notices say to-morrow!"

The notices, however, were good all round, and within a few days the little theatre was as crammed full as ever it had been in the palmiest season of the Bancrofters. And it ran, ran, ran. Over a year. Then came its success in the provinces, and finally Her Gracious Majesty, who had not been to a theatre, nor, if I remember aright, had there been any performance at Balmoral since the death of Prince Albert, was persuaded at the instance of His Royal Highness, the Prince of Wales (now King Edward), to command the company of the Prince of Wales's Theatre (the name of the playhouse must have been *pour quelque chose* in the matter) to give a performance before their Royal Highnesses and the Court at Balmoral, the Queen being present, and to bring *The Colonel* with them. The cast, as here follows, copied from the satin bill of the play, was not the original one as first given at the Prince of Wales's.

I here reproduce the special programme :—

"ABERGELDIE CASTLE,
Tuesday, 4th October 1881.

"Mr. Edgar Bruce, having been honoured with the kind permission of their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales to give a private performance at Abergeldie Castle, begs to introduce the following ladies and gentlemen of his company—in the cast of

THE COLONEL,

Written by Mr. F. C. Burnand.

Colonel Woottweell W. Wood, U.S. Cavalry	Mr. EDGAR BRUCE.
Richard Forrester	Mr. C. W. GARTHORNE.
Lambert Streyke	Mr. W. F. HAWTREY.
Basil Giorgioni	Mr. LY. GRAHAM.
Edward Langton	Mr. LILFORD ARTHUR.
Mullins	Mr. SMILY.
Parkes	Mr. A. HELMORE.
Romelli	Mr. W. H. LAMBERT.
Lady Tompkins	Miss GLOVER.
Olive	Miss C. GRAHAM.
Nellie	Miss M. SIDDONS.
Mrs. Blythe	Miss H. LINDLEY.
Goodall	Miss WARLHOUSE.

Act 1. SEVERITY. At Mr. Forrester's.

Act 2. LAXITY. At Mrs. Blythe's. A Flat on Fourth Floor.

Act. 3. LIBERTY. At Mr. Forrester's—next evening."

—

Mr. Edgar Bruce's cast, as above given, constituted the principal company then on tour with the piece, while the original cast, simultaneously

appearing in the comedy at the Prince of Wales's Theatre in town, was—

Mr. Charles Coghlan (*the Colonel*), Mr. W. Herbert (*Dick Forrester*), Mr. J. Fernandez (*Lambert Streyke*), Mr. R. Buckstone (*Basil Giorgioni*), Mr. Eric Bailey (*Edward Langton*), Mr. Rowley (*Mullins*), Mr. C. Cecil (*Parkes*), Mr. Grey (*Romelli*), Mrs. Leigh Murray (*Lady Tompkins*), Miss Myra Holmes (*Olive*), Miss C. Graham (*Nellie*), Miss Amy Roselle (*Mrs. Blythe*), Miss Houston (*Goodall*).

The above was the cast when the piece was first produced under Mr. Edgar Bruce's management, February 2, 1881.

By the way, as showing what a change has come over the amusements of London by evening and night at this period, I will quote an extract from the then "up-to-date" dialogue, which exemplifies the transformation that had taken place during the Colonel's long absence in India. He is proposing a "night out," and he says—

"We'll begin at Evans's."

Forrester. "It's closed."

Colonel. "Surrey Gardens."

For. "Closed."

Col. "Highbury Barn—Coal Hole—Cider Cellars."

For. "Closed—closed—closed."

Col. "Well, then, we'll just look in at the Arg"—

For. “The Arg”—

Streyke. “The Gyle’s closed. No ’Gyle. Everything’s closed.”

“What a place!” exclaims the Colonel; “give me life in Paris!”

“Take it,” says Streyke, handing him the Railway Guide. “Here’s Bradshaw.”

“Thanks,” returns the Colonel, putting it aside; “I know it by heart.”

This piece was written four years after my comedy of *Family Ties*, in which the French-English actor, Marius, made a marked success at the little Strand (1877), three years after *Our Club*, another “big Strand success,” and six years before *Blue Beard* at the Gaiety, which was, as far as I can remember, the first of the burlesques in three acts, thus breaking away entirely from the old form of telling the story in five consecutive scenes without an interval. *Ariel* was the last of my burlesques at the Gaiety under Mr. John Hollingshed’s management, in which Nellie Farren played; but *Ariel* was not within measurable distance of *Blue Beard*, and if it fairly served Miss Nellie Farren’s purpose during her, if I remember rightly, Australian tour, that was the limit of its service.

The mention of *The Colonel* has reconducted me into stage-land, and I may mention that since the date of its production, twenty-one years ago from the present time when I am penning these lines, *The*

Colonel has never been off the stage for any very considerable spell, as Mr. Charles Collette,¹ who married Miss Blanche Wilton, a sister of Lady Bancroft's, has of late years thoroughly identified himself with the Colonel in the provinces, where, during his many tours, *The Colonel* has been his constant companion. *The Colonel* was not a success in America. I was informed that Mr. Lester Wallack, who produced it in New York, could not "touch the part," and that the American public, with whom he had been a long-established favourite, took no interest in the "æsthetic craze," as they had not appreciated the Du-Maurieresque satires in *Punch*.

And now to redeem my promise and inform my readers how it was I came to think of Messrs. Bruce and Claremont in connection with *The Colonel*. On the very night that Edgar Bruce and his partner came to me about it, Fred. Clay, the composer, a real good friend of mine, as he was of all who knew him, and more particularly of Arthur Sullivan, had been dining at our house, and had sat up in my

¹ Mr. Charles Collette left the army—he was in the 3rd Dragoon Guards—and took to the stage professionally. He first appeared at the old Prince of Wales's Theatre under the Bancroft management, playing in most of the Tom Robertsonian plays and in other productions. He married Miss Blanche Wilton, Lady Bancroft's youngest sister, whose performance as Polly Eccles (in the popular play of *Caste*) was considered second only to that of the inimitable original. Within the last few years *The Colonel* has been Mr. Collette's companion on tour, but I rather think that it is now about time for the old soldier to retire on half-pay.

study smoking and chatting. I was rather down on my luck in consequence of the Bancrofts having "chucked" *The Colonel*, and especially regretted it, as the piece was so *à propos* of the æsthetic craze of the moment, popularised in caricature by Mr. Punch's Du Maurier.

Fred. Clay was very sympathetic, and rolling his cigarette he observed—

"It was unfortunate, especially as Arthur Sullivan and Gilbert"—

And here he broke off.

"What!" I exclaimed. "Are *they* doing an æsthetic subject?"

But Freddy held his tongue.

"I thought so," I went on. "Of course that's their next Savoy piece."

"I didn't *say* so," expostulated Freddy.

"No, you didn't, because you didn't finish your sentence," I returned; "but it's evident."

"Well," said the faithful Fred. "I do know, and it slipt out. But I mustn't say any more, and of course it is strictly *entre nous*."

He hadn't committed himself to any definite statement, and so was not guilty of any breach of confidence. After he had gone I was simply regarding my work on *The Colonel* as so much labour thrown away, when it suddenly occurred to me that Bruce and Claremont of the Prince of Wales's Theatre had, a little time since, asked me if I had a

piece, as their production was a failure. I foresaw that if the æsthetic craze were ridiculed in a Savoy opera before I could get my comedy produced, I should simply be accused of copying and trading on *their* originality. This is why I sent to Edgar Bruce and partner. If my piece got the start as a success, then the future æsthetic comic opera at the Savoy would be, as it were, the complement of the dramatic representation of the craze, *plus* dancing, music, singing, costumes, with a clever and fantastic story.

But if all these attractions came out before the simple comedy, I was afraid the critics would say that already there was "too much of the æsthetic craze about," that this piece of mine was *de trop*, that it was "inspired by the success of the Savoy æsthetic opera," and all sorts of such other pleasant things as dramatic critics have a knack of saying occasionally. However, *The Colonel* came out, and his position was firmly established some little time before Gilbert's delightfully absurd *Patience* with Sullivan's sparkling music took the town.

CHAPTER XXVII

THEATRICAL WORK—MR. PUNCH'S *POCKET-BOOK*—*THE ALMANACK*—MARK'S “PASSES”—HUMPH BARNET—ORDERS—SIR AUGUSTUS—HIS FATHER—OUR BUSINESS—RETRACING STEPS—FRANK MARSHALL—JOHN OXFORD—A MEMORABLE EVENING—“THE NIGHT OF THE PARTY”—GEORGE ROSE

FROM the time of my first joining the staff of *Punch* up to 1881 when *The Colonel* was produced, 2nd February, while bringing out any number of pieces,—for my total reaches up to and over one hundred and fifty, mainly burlesques and some half dozen German Reed entertainments,—which might be included under the head of “operettas in one act,” very carefully constructed, the requirements of the Gallery of Illustration being exceptional,—my “*Punch* work” had been going on steadily and prosperously, first under Mark Lemon, then under Shirley Brooks, who in June 1870 succeeded to the editorship. Mark used to do a fair amount of work outside *Punch*, even in the very latest years of his editorship, and his advice was eagerly sought by more than one theatrical manager besides Ben

Webster of the Adelphi, between whom and Mark there was a strong bond of friendship. Mark's counsel was also sought and followed by Mr. Ingram, of the *Illustrated London News*, for which Mark used frequently to arrange the Christmas Number, bringing into it any of the *Punch* staff who were ready and willing. In those days, "the good old times" of Mark Lemon, there was a cheery little annual called *Punch's Pocket-Book*, which lasted for some fifteen years (Sir John Tenniel is the fortunate possessor of an original set, from which only one volume is missing), and was illustrated regularly by all the *Punch* artists—Doyle, Leech, and others. In many later numbers there appear the exquisitely delightful and thoroughly original examples of Mr. Sambourne's work, perhaps some of his very best in the fanciful and grotesque line. *Punch's Pocket-Book* was decidedly a welcome Christmas present, and it had a considerable, though, as it ultimately proved, an insufficient sale. It was a costly affair, as, apart from the expenses of the illustrations above mentioned, there was a folding frontispiece, done by John Leech in colours; it was neatly bound in *morocco*, with a tab loop to fasten it; and the *honorarium*, for stories, songs, and contributions generally, was at the rate of a guinea a page, the pages being very small and well printed in perfectly clear and legible type.

"Now, gentlemen," Mark used to say to us as we



SIR JOHN TENNIEL

1887/88

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sat round the table at the dinner on the penultimate Wednesday in November—"Now, gentlemen! Walk up! walk up! Stories! Songs! A guinea a page! gentlemen, a guinea a page! Be in time!"

And with this stimulus we went to work. At the short tale and epigram, Shirley Brooks was unrivalled. I think he took most of the guineas, the professor, Percival Leigh, chipping in a good second, and myself, with the other members of the staff, excepting, I think, Tom Taylor, who did not do much for the *Pocket-Book*, getting in somewhere and somehow. It was a very pleasant and gracious way on the part of Messrs. Bradbury & Evans of giving "Dr. Mark and his merry men" a *bonus* by way of Christmas-box. My set is incomplete, but I am lucky in possessing fourteen of these little volumes. The *Pocket-Book* was sold at half a crown, and cheap at the price in those days; but *Punch's Almanack* gradually elbowed it out; and portable pocket-books containing all the information that business men might require could be had at a fifth of the price, though of course these latter made no sort of attempt at lightening dry facts with any humorous and artistic fancies. Where Mr. Gradgrind rules, the best witticism is inopportune. Joking in business is *de trop*. *Punch's Almanack*, occupied entirely at one time by John Leech, and after his decease by the staff of *Punch's* artists, supplied in a measure the place of the defunct *Pocket-Book*, *minus*, of course, the

dry details of "generally useful" information. Gradually the *Almanack*, which "had power to add to its number" of pages, did so, and from being "a close borough" it was, and is now, run on free trade principles, open to all-comers of approved merit.

When I was first "on the staff," and long before I had professionally the *entrée* at all the principal theatres, Mark Lemon invariably possessed, from week to week, a perfect store of "free admissions," or "passes," to the Haymarket under Buckstone, and to the Adelphi under Webster. Mark had merely to write on a slip of paper an "order for admission," and if there happened to be an available seat anywhere in the theatre, whichever theatre it might be, Mark's sign-manual was the warrant for its holder's admission. That system has long since ceased to exist, and rightly so; for it was liable to abuse, and indeed was considerably abused by unscrupulous persons who contrived by some round-about artful process to obtain these passes, and "for a consideration" they would hand them over to a friend. Every theatre at that time possessed a "free list," and that acting-manager was the most considered who had the most extensive list and the showiest people on it. When Fechter appeared at the Lyceum, and, indeed, before his day, Humphrey Barnett ("Humph Barnet") was the past-master of the acting-manager's science. If the success of a piece were doubtful after the first night, "Humph,"—

who was said to have had whole families in readiness awaiting his "orders," the men attired in respectable evening dress, and the ladies in rather second-rate costume, with invariably a red shawl thrown over their shoulders, serving the double purpose of hiding any defects, and of keeping them warm on their return to their (probably) suburban houses by omnibus, or when walking back to their residences within the precincts of Bloomsbury,—would send his "whips" out in every direction, and within an hour he would have "made a house." True, the *habitué* could distinguish at once the real paying public from those whom Fred. Robson used to call the "Orjers," but only the very experienced *habitué* could do this, while to the eye of the ordinary play-goer, for whom "Humph's" box-office clerk could only find a seat with considerable difficulty, the house appeared uncommonly good, and his report to his friends might be relied upon as favourable. "Humph," I believe, was an excellent servant to his manager; his hat was the shiniest I ever saw, quite memorable; and, on consideration, I should say that "Humph Barnet" was the glossiest of men, with the oiliest possible manner towards those with whom it was diplomatic to be courteous, while towards those to whose opinion and influence he was indifferent, or whom he considered as nobodies, "Humph" could be about as ill-mannered and off-hand as it is possible to conceive.

And while touching lightly on the subject of theatrical managers—and manageresses—I must stop to record some traits of “Gus Harris,” not *père* but *fils*, who became Sir Augustus Glossop Harris, Alderman of the City of London, and more likely to have been elected to the chief magistracy than many an older member of the Corporation who, however useful he might have been in his own “ward,” had done the State far less service than had Sir Augustus.

“Gus Harris” was an extraordinary personality. One of the kindest and most generous of men, he was also one of the fairest and sharpest in business. It was at one time rather the fashion to laugh at “Gus,” but this was a great mistake. No one knew better than he did himself exactly “where the laugh came in” in his own character. He could chuckle over himself, and did keenly enjoy every step in his own successful career, from the time when he couldn’t count upon having sufficient coin in his pocket to pay for a very moderate dinner. I just remember Gus Harris’s father chiefly by his having played *Château-Renaud*, in the *Corsican Brothers*, to, I think, Fechter’s *Louis dei Franchi* at the Princess’s, when he gave to this part what he considered a thoroughly light and airy “Parisian tone,” in order to differentiate it from the severer rendering it had previously received at the hands of Alfred Wigan (who was admirable in the part when he played it with

Charles Kean), and from the peculiarly butcherly broad style of Walter Lacy, who had also played it with Fechter, with whom Lacy was in every respect well contrasted. But Augustus Harris *père* was no actor, though he was an excellent stage-manager, and whether at the theatre, or at the Italian Opera with which his name was so long and so honourably associated, he did his work (excellently seconded at the opera by Sir Michael Costa, *chef d'orchestre*) in a way that was at once both masterful and masterly. Like father like son ; both “Gus” and “Charlie,” his younger brother, were admirable stage-managers, but there was only one thing they could not do, at least for a portion of their theatrical career ; they could not act together. However, this difficulty was got over, and for a while “Gus,” at “The Lane,” had never a better first lieutenant than Charles. Personally I liked them both ; but “Gus” was regarded by all, who knew him either in or out of business, with genuine affection ; nor can I recall in the near or in the dim and distant past, within my recollection of the theatrical world, any “past”-master so generally missed, nor one whose early removal from the scene of his exhausting labours, so many “of all sorts and conditions of men,” even up to the present time, so generally deplore.

Gus Harris, in consequence of the training his father had given him in a rough-and-tumble continental fashion, and in consequence also of coming

across, in his early years, so many foreigners of various nationalities with whom his father was connected in business at the opera, could speak French fluently, German fairly, and in Italian he was "*moderate doctus.*" Probably had he been a public schoolboy, an Etonian or a Harrovian, he would have known none of these things, or have acquired only a smattering of French in later years. Like Mr. Wyndham Flitter in Albert Smith's *Pottleton Legacy*, Sir Augustus Harris was able to say to some companion who had had what is known as "a good education," which includes a public school and a university training—

"How many times in society have you wished that you had been taught Italian and German instead of Latin and Greek? French you have fortunately picked up. Look at Spooner: he has been to college, and can run off the classics as I can the two-year-olds. Put us in mixed society, where there are foreigners, and see who is the muff—eh?"

I mention one incident, that happened well within the last ten years, as an illustration of his method—apparently want of it—of doing business. By appointment we supped together at the Lyric Club. On the table when I arrived a little late was the score of an opera and a book of words.

"Here," he said, "is just the thing for you and me. *La Demoiselle du Téléphone.* You do it in two acts (it is in three, but too long), and I'll get the com-

pany with Ada Blanche in it to go over the country, and then we'll take the first theatre that's open to us in London." Miss Ada Blanche had made herself very popular in his pantomime seasons at Drury Lane. A very clever artiste, and as a stage-manager for farcial pieces with chorus and dances she ran even "Charley 'Arris" uncommonly hard.

We talked it over, examined the book ; then we arranged the terms, of which he made a note on the back of an envelope, and I on a slip of paper in my pocket-book. The subject being dismissed, he suddenly dropped off into a sound sleep ; and thus, soon after midnight, I left him. I had often seen him like this. On one memorable occasion, when he was rehearsing, at night, a piece of mine at the Royalty Theatre, watching the effect from the stalls, he suddenly collapsed, and when I turned to refer to him for his opinion on some stage business, I found that he had dropped off fast asleep, with his head well down on his shirt front. When he was like this, to awaken him was useless, as, even if the object were attained, he would only rouse himself for a minute and exclaim abruptly, as if he had only been closing his eyes in order to deliberate on his decision, "That'll do. Dismiss the rehearsal. Everybody to-morrow at eleven. Sharp. Good-night." Then he would leave. His work in all sorts of ways, at the theatre, at the council, and in the city, had begun to tell on him.

In less than a year after rehearsing and starting *The Telephone Girl* in the provinces (where she has only quite recently finished a successful career of some years), Augustus Harris died. The end came very suddenly ; he was not much over forty.

His executors could find no agreement as to *The Telephone Girl* ; there was only my own memorandum. Fortunately it occurred to some one to examine Gus Harris's old pocket-book, and therein was found the envelope with the terms of the agreement dated in his handwriting and signed as a *memo.* by him. But for this I might have had some considerable difficulty in proving my claim, though of course the piece itself as written and arranged by me was in evidence.

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The mention of Sir Augustus and *The Telephone Girl* has rushed me forward to a date I had not intended to reach, so I will retrace my steps to the period between 1866 (*i.e.* between the production of *Ixion* and *Black Eye'd Susan* at the Royalty) and 1876, "when all the world was young."

One of the kindest-hearted, best read, and most eccentric young men within my fairly large circle of friends at this time was Frank Marshall. He was very well off, and came up to town, after a gay career at Oxford, with the curly locks of an Apollo, a taste for brilliancy in attire, evidenced by the shiniest patent leathers in constant use, and as

much white waistcoat as he could carry. He was naturally of a very pale complexion, wanting in tone, but was rarely without a cheery smile, and never without a hearty word of welcome. His white waistcoat and his creamy face won for him the sobriquet, by whom bestowed Heaven only knows, of "The Boiled Ghost." He was well in with the young London of our time, though, strictly speaking (we didn't do much speaking or anything else very "strictly" in those jovial days when we were all boys and girls together), he was my junior by some three years' worth of university terms, which, as I suppose, were the same at Oxford as with us at Cambridge. Frank Marshall plunged into the theatrical vortex ; he was a bit of an author, light and serious, but, first and foremost, he was a scholarly student, and this fact won him the lasting friendship of John Oxenford, who, when he came on to *our* scene, had acted as dramatic critic of *The Times* for many years, and had sustained his early reputation for elegant scholarship. Oxenford belonged to what would now be considered an old-fashioned school of journalistic critics, whose real opinions were to be found, as were those of Mr. William Bodham Donne, in the higher class magazines and most erudite "quarterlies." John Oxenford (he must have been over fifty at this period) was a genial soul, and so was Frank Marshall, some twenty-five years his junior. No better host could John have found than Frank, nor Frank a guest

more entirely to his mind. There was a certain Bohemianism about all the doings of this *coterie* of authors, literary and dramatic journalists and actors (considerably above that of the "Owl's Roost" as Robertson portrayed it in a back bar-parlour, or of the early Arundel Club, yet not quite up to the Garrick Club "form" of that time), representing as it then did a judicious admixture of various "learned" and dramatic professionals, with army men about town (as "patrons of the drama") and certain genially disposed members of the aristocracy. This was long before H.R.H. The Prince of Wales, now our Gracious King, became a member of the Garrick, having already as a young man given his exalted patronage to the A.D.C. at Cambridge.

Mais revenons à nos moutons, and the mention of *moutons* recalls the story to which the description of character given above is prefatorial.

Early in his London career, but, I fancy, just within the ten-year limit already given, Frank Marshall was *rangé*, and had an establishment of his own in Sloane Square. The place is so changed I can only identify "the spot where once lived and flourished" the eccentric Frank. To honour John Oxenford, Frank Marshall, like Hans Breitmann, "gave a barty" (Ah! and "where is dat barty now?"), and to it were asked all sorts and conditions of literary and theatrical personages. Among them was George Rose, whose bulk had increased

in proportion to his fame ; and his fame, as an entertainer and light-hearted biographer of *Mrs. Brown at the Play*, had increased immensely. Those who were coming to dinner had been requested to "come as they were," *chez* Frank Marshall *sans façon*. The theatrical guests whose engagements prevented them from being present at the dinner were invited to supper commencing at midnight, when "the guest of the evening," John Oxenford, was to receive an ovation, and an address in Latin was to be read to him by Frank Marshall, who, it had been arranged, was to appear in the costume of a classic Herald, while some one (to a stately actress I fancy this *rôle* was given) was to crown the recipient of these honours with laurels.

The dinner-hour was fixed for about 6.30, and more or less punctually to the hour the guests arrived. They were shown first into a narrow passage, then upstairs. Apologies were made in a hurried manner by Frank, who excused his wife from appearing at that moment in consequence of the sudden fractiousness of their infant in arms, or only recently on its legs, which would detain her in the nursery, and he "begged their kind indulgence" for himself, as he was a little behind time, and had to look after the wine and so forth.

Everyone was in a good humour ; everyone expected a first-rate entertainment, and everyone therefore graciously dispensed with the presence of the

hostess and host until the pair, or either, of them could make it convenient to appear.

Now, as afterwards appeared, the truth was that, most unfortunately, the two hireling waiters had arrived quite unfit for duty. It was a very hot summer day, and they had been refreshing themselves until they didn't know potatoes from peas, lamb from lobster, pudding from *poulet*, while as to wine—well, all poor Frank's carefully arranged order of bottles, duly set out on sideboard and mantelpiece, was utterly upset, as utterly as was our host himself. He danced on the staircase in hopeless, helpless rage; he anathematised the idiots; they only grinned and protested they were “all ri”; but the climax was reached when a third disreputable-looking “help” was chased up the kitchen stairs by the cook who had caught him secreting a couple of roast ducklings in his umbrella, with which, on some pretence or other, he was hastening to the front door, probably to deliver over his spoil to an accomplice outside! Frank could stand it no longer; this was the last straw; like Timon of Athens he would hurl these time-servers out of the house and pelt them with the dishes, sauces, and vegetables they had been doing their very best to spoil. He flew at the man who had fled from the cook with the duckling and sausages in his umbrella, wrenched this from his hand, emptied the pilfered food over his head, shouted wildly to the frightened

maid-servant, who had just that moment scuttled down the passage in answer to a summons from some guest on the doorstep, to "open the door wide," which she did with an action so sudden that the visitor on the doorstep, who was none other than George Rose, panting from heat, arrayed in a splendid white waistcoat, displaying an enormous amount of shirt front, found himself "facing the music," and wildly greeted with a war shout of vengeance and the words, "Get out of my house, you drunken, impudent thief!" accompanied by the concussion against his portly frame of a dirty, greasy, dishevelled, crumpled-up waiter, followed by a shower of duckling, with sauce, vegetables, and one large potato, which caught poor George right on the top of his nose. The waiter, in order to save himself from falling heavily, seized on George's light alpaca overcoat, which, unable to resist the double strain of its wearer staggering back to the right and the waiter dragging it off to the left, "gave," and parted company with the remainder, thus precipitating the assailant waiter head foremost on to the outer doorstep, and leaving George Rose swinging round and gasping, but fortunately able to support himself by the iron railings at the side. Before he could recover his breath, another waiter was literally chucked out to keep his fellow company, and a bottle or two that was secreted in his pocket went smash. Then the servant-maid ran for a policeman, to whom, on

his arrival, the third waiter, now in a state of innocent unconsciousness, was handed over, "with care, this side uppermost."

Poor George, with damaged face, duck-gravy-stained front and vest, was accommodated with a chair in the dining-room, while Frank, now that the first excitement was over, profuse in his regrets and apologies, carefully attended to him.

"I require re-dress," panted George, good-humouredly, "but I'm afraid nothing in your wardrobe is spacious enough for me."

However, matters were somehow arranged, and, finally, the guests amusing themselves as best they might in the interval, Frank set off in a cab to Gunter's, and within an hour a waiter, quite a model of respectability, was able to announce the dinner. And down trooped the guests.

They were all in excellent humour; especially John Oxenford, as in order to occupy the "interval," and on the principle that nothing is so abhorrent in nature as a vacuum, or, in dramatic representation, as a "stage-wait," Mrs. Marshall had most hospitably insisted on everybody taking just a glass of champagne as a "curtain-raiser."

The result was that the evening began in an exceptionally joyous and festive manner. The long-delayed dinner got mixed up with the supper, the guests for which arrived soon after eleven, before the male portion of the diners had thought of quitting the table.

As for the speech in Latin that was to have been delivered, it could not, at the last moment (time, 1.30 a.m.), be found anywhere, and so it was “taken as read,” amid the greatest possible applause. A wreath had been prepared to be placed by our host in classic fashion on John Oxenford’s brow by Frank Marshall, whose aim being a trifle unsteady, the wreath slipped over Oxenford’s nose and was lost under the table. Long ere the finish of the entertainment, the husbands and wives had departed, and Mrs. Frank Marshall had retired. When we left, Frank Marshall and John Oxenford were lecturing one another on the drama, both speaking together, and George Rose was telling a funny story to nobody in particular. At what hour the party broke up this deponent never ascertained. The proprietors of the drunken waiters interfered to prevent the case from getting into the police court, and compromised with Frank for the damages.

The story served George Rose for years after, and he never could tell it without shaking with laughter till the tears rolled down his cheeks as he enacted the whole scene.

“Did you stay till the end?” I asked George.

“My dear boy,” he replied, “I don’t think there ever was any end. At all events I never heard of it.”

CHAPTER XXVIII

MAURICE FITZGERALD—A DIFFICULTY—SECRET SERVICE—A RETREAT IN SUSSEX—MAURITIUS SENIOR — INTERESTING JOURNEY — NARROW ESCAPE—BRIGHTON AND BACK—FINAL SCENE — DISCOVERY — ACKNOWLEDGMENT — THE ANGEL IN THE STUDIO—MY FIRST PORTRAIT

IT was during the earlier, not precisely the “prehistoric,” part of my very busiest time when I was, as far as drama and light literature were concerned, a regular “working man,” that from two at least of my good friends already mentioned, F. C. Wilson and Maurice Fitzgerald, I received frequent invitations to stay at their houses in the country, and so gain for self and wife, if both were able to go, an occasional “thorough holiday.” Fred. Wilson’s at Theobalds, Waltham, became to me in place of a country house: it was a charming spot, and his guests enjoyed the most perfect freedom. True, there was nothing much to do except to play croquet or take walking exercise about the country; but to do nothing, to have plenty of time to do it in, and to do it in my own way has always suited me, and, I daresay, it is on the whole the best plan for

thoroughly enjoying a stay in a country house. To be told "this is Liberty Hall," and to have rules stuck up about the house naming the hours of meals with punctuality requested, restrictions placed on the cigar or pipe, lights to be out at a certain time, and then excursions planned in the daytime to places you don't want to see, accompanied by a party that you don't want to go with, in fact, all sorts of pleasure made, by the authority of your host, into a duty of politeness becomes irksome. This was as conspicuous by its absence *chez* Wilson, at Theobalds, as it was at Seaford, or wherever, in Kent or Sussex, the migrating Maurice Fitzgerald temporarily took up his residence. London he abominated, except for a short stay, when I was glad to accommodate him with a room, as we were also able to put up my other excellent entertainer, Fred. Wilson. Maurice Fitzgerald was a cricketer (no relation whatever to the cricketing Fitzgerald family, of whom "Bob" was secretary to Lords), and he would join in small country matches, not only because he liked the game, but because he valued the exercise and the necessity of being in the open air, inhaling the appetising breeze coming across the Sussex Downs, bringing with it the promise of thorough enjoyment of his well-ordered and nicely balanced late dinner. For dining "the young Mauritius" understood; and whist he understood, being a past-master in the game, and on three subjects, whist,

wine, and dining, has he written well, wisely, poetically, humorously, and elegantly. I am afraid his works were published anonymously, and though I have, I am sure, some of them, yet it is so long since I have seen them or quoted from them, that not without considerable search could I now hit them off in their hiding-places wherever they may be. His hobbies were gastronomy and its literature, whist, and epigrammatic verse. If ever there were a man loving all the refinements of life, and, as a bachelor, blessed with ample means of indulging himself to his heart's content *en garçon*, that man was Maurice Fitzgerald. Judge then of my surprise when on paying him a visit at Seaford (which seaside place years ago was very different from the rather fashionable resort into which it has since developed) he introduced me to a very handsome lady, with the curt remark—

“I don't think you've ever met my wife.”

No, I never had. She was a charming lady, a widow, with a small daughter who promised to be as handsome as her mother. We got on excellently together, and we three walked about the seashore, myself and Mrs. Fitz chatting, and Fitz silently chuckling. He had enjoyed my surprise.

Then he swore me to secrecy; and the secret would have gone with me to the “silent tomb,” but for subsequent events, which forced from him a full revelation of the facts. His father was very rich and very eccentric; I fancy, too, that there was the

old story of an intervening "*noverca*," not necessarily "*injusta*," which prevented matters from being quite comfortable at Boulge Hall, in Norfolk, which was the family mansion. Gerald, the elder brother, was as eccentric as his father, and was more or less of a wanderer; and Maurice saw very little of him, nor were the brothers in each other's confidence. They were good friends, *voilà tout*. Their father, like the crabbed uncles and the Anthony Absolutes of old comedy, would not hear of his sons marrying anyone who was not of his choosing. He had his ideas on this subject, and stuck to them. Should either of his sons marry without his full and free consent, which would only be given when the lady was of his own selection, then the offender would be cut out of his will and be left to take the consequences. Old Fitzgerald rarely entertained; he was a bit of a preacher at "evangelical" meetings, and as his house was kept on the strictest evangelical and, I think, "temperance" principles, both Gerald the Rover and Maurice the Metaphysician found it "no place for them." So alternately, and from time to time, *pour faire contenance* they used to go down and pass a few days under the paternal roof, and then give it a wide berth for some months. This suited all parties, and thus they lived apart "a most united family," each of the brothers "ganging his ain gait," and so following most filially the parental example. Of Gerald after quitting Cambridge I had heard little

and had seen less. Of Maurice I saw as much as did most persons who had the privilege of his friendship; but that he, the ideal bachelor, the unimpassioned, the calm, judicious, the experienced-beyond-his-years young man, "the wise youth," as George Meredith, in *Richard Feverel*, describes one of his eccentric characters, whose traits were to be found in the original, who was our friend Maurice or "the young Mauritius," which was another name bestowed on him by George Meredith, that such an one as this, so "superior" a person, should have tumbled head over heels into love and matrimony was "one of those things that," as poor Dundreary used to say, "no fellow could understand." When we were alone Maurice confided to me that he had been married some months; he impressed on me that the fact must remain a profound secret, and therefore that he had refrained from asking any of his married friends to visit him in the country.

"You see the difficulty," he observed, evidently not feeling quite sure as to how I was going to receive the news.

Naturally I asked that my wife should share the secret with me, and pointed out to him that even if he did not give me permission to tell, it was certain that should we meet in London or come across one another at Brighton, Seaford, or any other likely place, the revelation, in justice to both ladies and to ourselves, was inevitable. After some demur, I boldly

ventured to bring Mrs. Maurice into the argument ; and, needless to add, these tactics settled the matter, and my wife and self were free of their house, or houses, in the country, as were they, in turn, of our little house on the very rare occasions of their visiting London.

But still their life was a rather difficult one ; as what they had revealed to us they had to keep a profound secret from everybody else. They settled down for a while in a lovely little village in Sussex, within reasonable distance of the railway station. Of course the butcher, the baker, and all the tradesmen were on the *qui vive*. The servants, only two, were not in the secret, and what they said, or what they made out the case to be for the sake of their own respectability, I don't know. Suffice it that the tradesmen, on finding they had a good customer and ready money weekly, did their best, especially on discovering that they were dealing with a man who knew what he wanted in dealing with *them*, and who insisted on having the very best of everything, no matter how simple the order or how difficult it might be to obtain the articles in question. He had large stores from London as well, and his perfect use of *condiments* was a lesson to amateurs in cookery, while his well-thought-out arrangement of every meal, breakfast, lunch, and dinner was the result of calm study, guided by such sound common sense, as would have delighted, in these later days, that Lucullus of "modern

food and feeding," the eminent surgeon, Sir Henry Thompson, at whose "octaves" (or perfect little dinners of eight) "the young Mauritius" was, alas! never destined to assist.

The conditions of their life in the country isolated them. The parson, seeing Mrs. Maurice and little child at church, of course, wished to visit his newly arrived parishioners. Maurice himself was not a church-goer. I never clearly ascertained that he was anything at all except a philosopher who "looked," as Paley says, "on all religions alike," and smiled on them as benignly and compassionately as he would on freemasons in all the gallant frippery of their craft. He respected the Catholic Church as being consistent and logical; and could he have granted the premisses he would have been a Catholic. Gerald, his brother, by the way, became a Catholic, and made a good ending. Maurice disliked the clergy, in a general way, always excepting the Catholic, because a priest was unencumbered by a wife. Society gossip was abhorrent to Maurice. I mention this so as to explain how any advances on the part of the Anglican clergyman of the place (wherever he might temporarily settle down) would be received if he ventured on an official visit. The doctor would come to dine, but he was, as it happened, a bachelor, and whatever he knew, or suspected, he discreetly kept to himself. So "society" here was puzzled, and was kept at arm's length.

"But," I remarked, when after the first hour's walk in which I had been admitted into his full confidence, "surely it's very dangerous. Some of these people may know your father, and"—

At this moment the postman on his way stopped, touched his hat, and fumbled in his letter bag.

"Anything for me?" asked Mauritius.

"Yes, sir," answered the postman, and having delivered to him some newspapers and letters, resumed his general delivery.

Maurice handed me a paper, and I read the address—"M. F. Marston, Esq., The Cottage, etc." Then he handed me another letter addressed to "Mrs. Marston, The Cottage, etc." I didn't understand.

He showed me one with similar address to that on the newspaper, "M. F. Marston, Esq., The Cottage," and this he deliberately opened, chuckling the while.

"But," I objected, "these letters are not for you!"

"Yes, they are," he returned. "That is why I met you at the station, and why I took you away from the house, and from anybody in whose hearing you might accidentally have addressed me by my real name."

"Your *real* name?" I repeated, puzzled.

"The young Mauritius" was now thoroughly enjoying my perplexity and his own astuteness.

"Don't you see," he put it, "we can't be known here, or anywhere we may happen to go, by our own name, or my father would at some time or other hear of it, and it would be all over with us beyond hope of redemption. So you see, until we can find the propitious moment for breaking the news to *him*—and Heaven only knows when that may be—perhaps never—we have made up our minds to live quietly under the style and title of Mr. and Mrs. Marston."

Of course all this, under the strictest seal of secrecy, I communicated to my wife, as may have been already inferred.

How he contrived to get his letters I forget, for not one of his old friends who continued to correspond with him knew of this *alias*. But he was an adept at mysteries, and the little comedy of his life was very far from being free from not a few amusing and dramatic situations.

Thus Mr. Fitzgerald *père* travelling down to Brighton, and arriving but a few minutes before the train started, was hustled into a carriage in which a lady was seated with dressing-cases and wraps, and to whom he apologised for disturbing her, "but the train was so full," and so forth; and she, sweetly smiling, begged he would not apologise, and pointed out that the seat which he had taken had been already secured. More she would have added, but at that moment the starting-bell rang and the other traveller by whom the seat had been bespoken

hurried up, jumped in ; the porter banged the door, took his tip, and the train had scarcely started when the old gentleman, who had so politely intruded himself, exclaimed, in a tone which, in spite of his evident astonishment, was sweetly smooth—

“Why, Maurice, dear fellow, this is a pleasant surprise !”

“Maurice, dear fellow,” was staggered, but in another second he recovered his presence of mind, and said with marked emphasis and considerable discretion—

“My dear father, I am so pleased,” and no doubt he did his best to look it.

Then the old gentleman turned to the lady, and begged her to excuse their talking over family matters, as, the fact was, he hadn’t met his son for some time, and had no idea he would be travelling by the same train as himself.

When Fitzgerald *père* bent over his bag to search for a packet of sandwiches and a book, Fitz the younger took occasion to make signs to the lady, who at once comprehended the situation, and knew that this was a *momentum unde pendet æternitas*, or at least the happiness and comfort of their married life, for this lady was none other than Mrs. Maurice Fitzgerald, who, unknown to Fitzgerald *père*, was his own daughter-in-law. Fortunately papa was much interested in himself, and with ready tact the philosophic young Mauritius, by deftly questioning him,

kept him harping on his favourite themes, until his sandwiches and subjects of conversation coming to an end, he fitfully dozed, then fell into a sound sleep.

But was the sleep genuine or feigned? The young Mauritius wouldn't trifle with the weasel, but, pretending to read, he wrote a note of brief directions, and placing it in a newspaper handed it to his wife, saying politely "that perhaps the lady would like to see the evening paper."

It was simply telling her to "get out." She was to "descend at Hassocks Gate, get the luggage of both, and drive home; he would follow, wire, or write." So far so good.

Fitz *père* awoke; became chatty with the lady, to whom he had evidently taken a fancy, and she on her part seized every opportunity during the remainder of the slow journey—it was a stopping train—of ingratiating herself with one, whose favour meant so much for her and her husband.

Then came difficulties.

"Where," inquired papa, "was dear Maurice going?"

Dear Maurice daren't tell the exact truth, so he boldly answered—

"Brighton."

Now, casuistically considered, this was at that moment the fact, though not the truth as interpreting the original intention and purpose of his journey. He was, as were they all, journeying towards

Brighton, but Brighton had not been up till that moment his particular objective.

"Oh," said his father, "I arranged to get out at Burgess Hill" ("thank Heaven!" heavily breathed Maurice and his wife), "as I have to see Mr. —" (naming the clergyman there), "who is coming on with me to Brighton for a meeting where we have both to speak."

His son and son's wife were puzzled but hopeful. If he got out at Burgess Hill, all would be well, as it was the station *before* their Hassocks Gate.

So the journey proceeded ; Fitz the elder rendering himself more and more agreeable, and, on arriving at Burgess Hill, expressing himself as extremely sorry to leave, and hoping that at some future time he should have the pleasure of meeting the lady again. Then he gave Maurice his address at Brighton where he would expect to see him. And so he descended, leaving the happy pair delighted. "Wasn't it an escape!" exclaimed Mauritius ; and to make assurance doubly sure he did not at once re-enter the compartment (from which he had descended in order to facilitate the egress of his esteemed parent), but unconsciously obeying Mr. Toole's advice, as once given in a catch phrase, "Keep your eye on your father and your father will pull you through," he watched him, and to his great delight saw a clergyman with a bag run up and welcome him.

"Now he's off," he muttered, pausing at the door of the compartment.

"And so are we," said his wife, being under that impression.

Not a bit of it: that old clergyman was a *persona grata* with the railway officials at Burgess Hill, and an extra minute was allowed him in order that his dear friend and visitor might urge him along by the elbow and push him into the very compartment the ancient Fitzgerald had only just two minutes before vacated! Of course Maurice had to feign extreme pleasure at the happy chance that had brought his excellent parent back to him once more and so unexpectedly.

"I'm so glad to be here again," said old Fitzgerald cheerfully, addressing the lady. "My friend's coming with me to Brighton. Allow me"—and here followed introductions.

The next station was Hassocks Gate and, willy-nilly, Mrs. Maurice had to leave. She was assisted out with the utmost politeness by old Fitzgerald, who was profuse in his apologies for not being able to assist her to a cab and so forth. A brilliant idea occurred to Maurice.

"I feel awfully faint," he said to his father; "I'll just go to the refreshment room for a little brandy."

"Won't be time, dear boy," his father said blandly, detaining him by the arm.

"Yes, yes," gasped Maurice, trying to act the part of a man overcome by the heat.

"No, no," urged his sympathetic parent, summoning his clerical friend to assist him in helping Maurice into the carriage.

"Fortunately," observed the cleric compassionately, "although a partial abstainer, I always carry a small flask for medicinal purposes."

There was no help for it. Maurice was a prisoner; he had to recover from his faintness, and be dosed with indifferent brandy, and finally on arriving at Brighton he had to bewail the pretended loss of his ticket, and had to pay for a new one, as he could not let his father see that he had only booked to Hassocks Gate. Then on pretence of looking for his luggage, which of course had been taken away by his wife, he remained behind at the Brighton terminus, while his father and his clerical friend drove off to their hotel.

Maurice didn't waste time over his invisible baggage, but consulted local train guides, and, unable to find a train for Hassocks Gate, remained at Brighton that night in attendance on his father, who departed next day; as also did Maurice, absenting himself on plea of finding his luggage and so getting back to his disconsolate wife.

Within a few years after this Maurice paid his father his annual visit of affectionate ceremony, and had scarcely been in the house forty-eight hours ere

he was seized with the illness from which he never recovered. Old Mr. Fitzgerald was distracted with grief, and then it was that all his real love for his younger son showed itself. There was nothing he would not do, no request he would not grant, and so, at that supreme moment, Maurice asked him one favour, and that was to send for the only person in the world who could nurse him through an illness, and that person was his wife.

The shock must have been overpowering to his father. But he would not go back on his promise, even had he the heart to do so. So Mrs. Maurice was sent for post haste, and before the day was out she had been most warmly welcomed by her father-in-law, who, on receiving her as she descended from the carriage, was utterly, but most agreeably, surprised to recognise in her the lady who had so taken his fancy on the occasion of the memorable journey to Brighton, as already narrated.

The reconciliation was complete, but, alas! my poor friend did not live to personally reap the benefit of it. It was enough for him to know that his wife and children would inherit what he, had he lived and had his marriage never been recognised by his father, could not have bequeathed them.

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It seems a strange thing to say, but 'tis true nevertheless, that I once had my portrait painted by an Angel. This is an absolute fact. The reader

may think that the painter's name was Angel or that it was by M. Angeli, which would be "angels." No. This is how it came about.

Among the many artistic friends of my Uncle Theophilus was John Prescott Knight, R.A., secretary to the Royal Academy, and portrait painter whenever he got the chance of a sitter. I suppose in early days he had done some good work, and had some influential friends on the Academy Council, or otherwise how he could ever have been elected Academician it is difficult, judging from such works of art as I have seen of his, to imagine. My good-natured uncle thought he "owed him a turn," and so gave him the commission to paint my portrait.

J. Prescott Knight was an "Irvingite," that is a follower of the Irving who in the early part (I believe) of the nineteenth century professed to be "inspired," and with his followers to have received the gift of "prophesying with tongues." The Irvingites, when under divine inspiration, spoke as the Spirit moved them, and their unintelligible utterances were translated by other spiritually gifted Irvingites. The Irvingites, or members of the "Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church" (most Londoners know the fine building in Gordon Square), were governed by "Angels," and little Knight was "an Angel." In private life I have no doubt he was as excellent a man as he was upright and honourable in his public capacity. He might have been occa-

sionally inspired as an "Angel," but very rarely as an artist.

"We," meaning the Irvingites, he said to me while at work on the picture—"we have restored the Order that was lost in the Roman Church and in the whole Christian world."

"What is that?" I inquired.

"The Apostles," he replied, painting away quite methodically. "You have bishops, priests, deacons, and so forth; but where are your apostles?"

I looked as wise as I could, and confined myself to echoing his inquiry. "Ah! where *are* the apostles?" I asked.

Then he began his exposition of Irvingite doctrine, from which I only gathered that he, personally, appeared entirely satisfied with his own explanation. He ignored the Pope as succeeding to the "prerogatives of St. Peter," but saw no sort of difficulty in accepting the teaching of Irving, Angel, preacher, and member of Parliament. I was there to be painted, not to be lectured, and still less to be led into a theological argument. So, though it might have been "pain and grief to me," yet I held my tongue, and I rather think that he congratulated himself on having either secured a convert to his Irvingite creed, or on having silenced me as a Catholic. He evidently saw the Catholic Church as he saw me, that is, from his own point of view, and he painted me as he thought he saw me, the result being

a figure intended for a portrait of myself, bearing as much resemblance to the original as did *his* ideas of the Catholic Church to the Catholic Church itself. He strangely enough saw me in his mind's eye as I never was. He represented me wearing a kind of coat that I never wore, and never *have* worn, a sort of wristbands that were totally different from mine, and a green tie that I repudiated, but on which he insisted as being far more artistic than the one that formed part of my ordinary attire. I do not know what my uncle thought of the picture ; he never expressed any opinion on the subject, but presented it to me, and as a curiosity I have it now, and for years I have been trying to find some original whom it might more closely resemble than it does myself. I have not succeeded. Had the hair only been more auburn it would have passed for an indifferent likeness of Tom Robertson, that is with those who had but a faint recollection of Tom in his velvet coat, ragged-looking wristbands, and generally unkempt appearance. In my hands Knight had placed a notebook and a pencil as being "characteristic." These properties suggest the portrait of a "bookie" who is ready to lay "two to one bar one" with all comers. It was a great piece of luck for my family and for myself that, many years afterwards, Professor Herkomer undertook my portrait, which is among the best he ever painted, in fact a masterly picture, worthy of a distinguished portrait

painter, in exchange for which I was to have written him a weird kind of drama for performance at his theatre at Bushey. It was to have been a work of imagination. And "a work of imagination" it remains; for though outlined in three acts, and though the first act was partially completed, yet as a whole it never became concreted, nor do I see any use to be made of the *scenario*, nor of the suggestions for songs and dialogues "spoken to music," unless it occurs to some manager to develop Hubert Herkomer's fanciful, and, to a certain extent, "Wagneresque" idea. But of this more anon: and farewell to the worthy John Prescott Knight, son of the "little Knight," an excellent comedian in the days of the elder Farren and of the elder Mathews, whose portrait in a scene with these two actors is in the Garrick Club.

CHAPTER XXIX

FROM LOWELL TO CHOATE—PHELPS—LORD PAUNCEFOTE—SIR FRANCIS JEUNE—BISHOP MAGEE—CANON FARRAR—SIR GEORGE LEWIS—EDMUND YATES—DE LARA—A DIFFICULTY—A TRIAL—A GENT—MONTAGU WILLIAMS—TRIAL—SIR REGINALD HANSON—OTHER TRIALS—RETRACING STEPS—OLYMPIC

I HAVE had the pleasure of meeting all the American Ministers—who, up to the time of Mr. Bayard, were not styled “Ambassadors”—from Mr. Lowell to Mr. Choate of the present day, who, Phelps among his predecessors alone excepted, is the best after-dinner speaker for any special occasion of them all; and that is saying a good deal, since there never was sent over here from America any Minister that did not approve himself to everyone as a speaker, whether after-dinner or at a meeting with a serious purpose in view, of the very first quality.

Lowell's style was of the highly polished school, and on the occasion when I heard him he spoke fluently but without that dry quiet satiric humour that characterised the epigrams of Phelps, and he

rarely showed that hearty enjoyment of his rare wit which comes so genially from Mr. Choate, and at once puts the audience on the very best of terms with a speaker who is so evidently on the very best of terms with himself.

It was my good luck to be present at the luncheon, I am almost sure it was a lunch and not a dinner, given by the Lord Mayor, Sir George Faudel-Phillips, Bart., when Mr. Phelps, in replying to the toast of his health, made an allusion to some diplomatic or undiplomatic mistake of Lord Pauncefote's, which at the time was occupying public attention, incidentally defending Lord Pauncefote from unfair attacks. Mr. Phelps said very quietly—

"It was a mistake. True. But what of that? The man who never makes a mistake"—here he paused for a second, then added—"will never make anything."

Then he waited: and the audience suddenly seemed to awaken to the fact that they had just heard a really witty epigram, which they thereupon acclaimed with laughter and the very heartiest applause that lasted for full a minute.

I have heard this *mot* quoted over and over again as originally uttered by anyone except the person whom I heard—"with these ears"—say it, and I am convinced that it was Phelps's very own, not a quotation, but a genuine "happy thought," a real inspiration. By the way, my account of

this is corroborated by Sir Francis Jeune, who was present on the same occasion, and who has no sort of doubt that this was Phelps's own original epigram, and was given for the first time on this particular occasion.

A propos of Sir Francis Jeune, it was at his house at both luncheon and at several "evenings" that I met Dr. Magee, who succeeded Dr. Jeune in the Bishopric of Peterborough, and who subsequently became Archbishop of York. His Irish stories were told with such real enjoyment of their fun and humour and with so rich a brogue that to transfer them to paper seems to be almost like taking the life out of them. Besides, they are now so well known. His telling of the story of Dr. Whately being shown the way through the churchyard of a Protestant church by a little ragged Catholic boy, and of the lad telling him that, as a Catholic, he could believe good Protestants "might be saved on account of their inconsayvable ignorance," is too well known for me to do more than allude to it here.

I doubt, however, if in purely Irish stories Dr. Magee could quite come up to the Rev. James Healy, "Father James," of Little Bray, among whose many witticisms will be remembered the reply, now a classic, that he made to his fellow-traveller in the train, a Presbyterian who insisted on controversy, and who defied him to prove the existence of Purgatory.

"I'm content with it as it is," said Father James.
"You'll only go farther and fare worse."

And here, while speaking of clergy, Protestant and Catholic, I call to mind the Rev. F. Bellew, a remarkably striking personality and, I believe, a powerful preacher, who, after considerable service in the Church of England, retired and died a good Catholic layman, and another more distinguished Anglican ecclesiastic, Archdeacon Farrar, whose acquaintance I made at the house of my uncle, Arthur Burnand, where the Archdeacon was a frequent visitor. Farrar represented the "Broad Church," and on more than one occasion his views were found to be somewhat broader than those of the Church to which he belonged. But nothing came of it. He was passed over whenever there was a bishopric vacant, for not even the great friendliness shown him by Queen Victoria could put a mitre on the head of a clergyman whose orthodoxy had been questionable. So he was made Dean of Canterbury.

He was Canon Farrar when I first made his acquaintance, and on one evening when the conversation had turned upon some ritualistic eccentricities that at a certain church had disgusted my good uncle and aunt, who were merely ordinary go-to-church-on-Sunday people, I happened to mention a strange prayer-book which had lately been published, wherein the communion service of the Church of England

17, DEAN'S YARD,
WESTMINSTER, S.W.

March. 15-

My dear Mr Burnand

Your letter & the
book had a painful interest
for me. I can fully under-
stand, & even to a great
extent sympathise with the
position of Dr. Newell at
Cardinal Newman's ^{admonish}
Manning (whom I knew intimately)

Yours etc

little book with its very
pertinent observations and

views in a day or two.

I am just leaving town for
two days.

Yours very truly

P. W. Storer.

M. M. O.

was actually "fitted up" with all from the Roman Missal that could transform it into the Mass of the Catholic Church.

Canon Farrar was not acquainted with it, nor could he conceive that at that time any Ritualist could have gone to such lengths.

I asked if he would like to see it, and undertook to procure him a copy, and to have it carefully annotated, so that at a glance he could see how the service, by a curiously cunning process, was made to resemble, and yet to be slightly differentiated from, the Mass of the Catholic Church.

The book I have now in my possession, with all the notes made for me in the neatest possible handwriting by Mrs. Gilbert à Beckett, and from Canon Farrar I received the accompanying letter, which, by the kind permission of Dr. Farrar, the late Dean's brother, I am enabled to reproduce.

This book, which I also showed to Lord Grimthorpe as a curiosity, was printed and published in 1888 by Swan Sonnenschein & Co., and was entitled *Ceremonial of the Altar: A Guide to Low Mass according to the ancient customs of the Church of England, compiled by a Priest.*

I fancy it was suppressed.

The mention of Lady Jeune's soirées recalls to me a memorable occasion when George Lewis, now Sir George Lewis, Bart., the universally sought and exceptionally astute solicitor, was able to do me one

of those "good turns which deserves another" whenever the opportunity might arise.

And *à propos* of this eminent solicitor, I remember on the occasion of a *première* at a popular theatre when the auditorium was crowded with notabilities and celebrities of all sorts and sizes, Mr. Edmund Yates, after smilingly nodding to Sir George as the latter squeezed his way into the stalls, turned to me and said, *sotto voce*, in his jestingly cynical way—

"There goes a man who could hang one half the house and transport the other."

"Then where would *you* be?" I asked Edmund.

"By George!" he replied, as, with an expressive wink, he jerked his head in George Lewis's direction and chuckled with the air of self-approval that marks a man who appreciates a good thing when he says it himself.

But in order to return to Lady Jeune's soirées and to the "memorable occasion" above alluded to, I must be permitted to make a certain "*circum-bendibus*."

Mr. Punch, who has "never set down aught in malice," though in his earlier days, and in the public interest as he conceived it, uncommonly severe on some persons of the highest consideration, and playfully satirical with others, including the "Poet Bunn," who in return gave Mr. Punch's "young men" of that period a well-deserved lesson,

has only once, to my knowledge, been called to account in a court of law to answer a charge of libel. In my time there were two instances, of which the first got as far as the Mansion House and stopped there; and the second was settled without the aid of judge and jury.

The story of this second case is as follows. Its hero was Mr. Isidore de Lara, the well-known composer and singer. The other characters in this farcical piece were—Mr. Percy Reeve, Mr. Harry Furniss, Mr. Guedalla, who was de Lara's solicitor, with Sir George Lewis (at that time "George" without the "Sir") as the *Deus ex machina*. It was not a bad cast for a farcical comedy with a somewhat serious interest. Mr. Percy Reeve, musical critic, versifier, and sharp article writer, was doing a short series of amusingly satirical papers in *Punch*, in which for my part I had never detected anything of a personal character. Some imp of mischief, some idle hand from the world of practical joking, a Puck-like spirit, inspired Percy Reeve to write a poem in which he described a musician, who, to me, was simply a creature of the writer's imagination, but at the same time quite a possible character. It never occurred to my innocent mind to inquire if this was a "living picture" of any well-known original; and as a matter of fact, not frequently seeing Mr. Percy Reeve, I did not give the matter a second thought, even if I had ever given it a first one, which I doubt. Whatever imp had

undertaken this business he was not at a loss for the next movement in his mischievous plan. Something in this descriptive and generally satiric poem suggested that a fanciful illustration might give the article an importance that would attract attention. I was right. The illustration settled the matter ; it *did* attract attention,—too much.

So Percy Reeve's article, with an illustration by Harry Furniss, appeared. Within a very few days I had notice of an action on the part of Mr. de Lara, who considered himself libelled by this article.

I was thunderstruck. I knew Mr. Isidore de Lara by name and by reputation. I had a vague idea of having once seen him and heard him at a piano ; but of this I was by no means certain ; at all events, as to his personal appearance, I had but a cloudy idea of what he was like, nor did I remember ever to have come across a portrait of him. The article, to my mind, was a satirical description of an imaginary, but quite possible, person, and showed a type according to the author's idea.

Naturally my first step was to send for Percy Reeve.

"Did you mean it for de Lara?" I asked straightly.

Percy did not consider this a fair question, and parried it with a return. "What makes you ask me that?" Then I told him.

"I don't see that I am bound to mention for

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whom I intended it," he objected. "Say it was for no one in particular ; a *species* of a *genus*, eh ?"

I explained that *that* was my idea. If he did not mean it for de Lara, could he go into the witness-box and swear to that effect ?

"Um, um." He walked up and down with his "considering cap" on, "taking the floor" of my room as if he were measuring it for a new carpet.

"Supposing I did mean it for him ?" he put it.

"Well if you *did* mean it for de Lara, whom personally *I* don't know from Adam or Tubal Cain," I replied, "then, I ask, is your article true in every particular ?"

"Ah," returned Percy immediately, "'the greater the truth the greater the libel,' eh ?"

"Upon my word," I said emphatically, "I can *not* see where the libel comes in. But that is not the point. If *he* thinks it a libel"—

"But I never mentioned his name," protested Reeve, "and how on earth could de Lara have ever applied it to himself, *unless it had been illustrated with a portrait of him by Furniss?*"

"What !" I exclaimed, horrified. "Was that picture by Furniss a likeness of de Lara ?"

"A first-rate one," answered Reeve, chuckling—"a really first-rate one."

"Was it !" I observed, considerably troubled. Then I was compelled to confess my ignorance of de Lara's lineaments. As I have intimated

above, I had once seen him, I think, for a few seconds, but I should not "have known him anywhere," and certainly did not recognise him in this unfortunate picture by clever Harry Furniss.

"The very spit of him," said Reeve emphatically, and still chuckling.

He professed himself ready to go into the box, and in fact to defend the action himself; but, as I pointed out to him, the action was not brought against *him*. So there the interview ended.

The next person to be interrogated was Harry Furniss. His answer was clear. He had read the article, and if de Lara was *not* intended, who on earth was it? He (Furniss) knew de Lara, of course he did, and at once he saw that, willy-nilly, any illustration that he put to the article must inevitably be de Lara. The Tricky Sprite that was playing this practical joke had certainly arranged it admirably.

"Why," I inquired of Furniss, "didn't you consult me as to the portrait?"

"First," he replied, "there wasn't any too much time; and, secondly, by your having sent the article to me I thought of course you knew all about it."

Unanswerable. There was only one course for me to pursue—"consult a solicitor." Naturally enough, I determined on at once invoking the aid of George Lewis. And full of this I put the papers in my pocket stating the whole case, and went home to

dress, dine, and proceed with my wife to an "at home" at Lady Jeune's. Here, as usual, there was everybody who was anybody. Sir Francis, judge in the Admiralty and Divorce Courts,—curious legal mixture of mariners who had come to grief and of married persons having made shipwreck of their lives,—came up to me, and in his most pleasantly confidential manner admitted that he knew something of this case, and as he rather sided with the person attacked, he wanted to have a quiet chat with me on the subject. He would see me before I left, as, of course, he was assisting Lady Jeune in her reception. Evidently, from what he said, the article, coupled with the portrait, had appeared to his legal mind "rather a nasty one." While thus cogitating, on the landing, up the stairs came lightly and cheerfully the very man I wanted to meet. At once George Lewis gave me his undivided attention in a quiet room "far from the madding crowd." I placed the papers in his hands. "Who is the attorney?" he asked.

"Guedalla," I answered. Whereat he appeared satisfied.

"Meet me to-morrow afternoon, and I'll see about it," said George Lewis; and to his own considerable personal inconvenience, as I subsequently discovered, he met me at the appointed time, and both of us called on Mr. Guedalla, in whose office I met Mr. Isidore de Lara for the first time in my life. By the way,

I think that on this occasion George Lewis was not present, but that after I had had my interview with principal and attorney George appeared on the scene. It was all very friendly, as I had only to state the simple truth and admit my utter ignorance of everything except actually de Lara's name. Mr. Guedalla made no difficulties, and ultimately after he had had an interview with George Lewis alone, the latter came to me and said that for an apology in *Punch* and by my paying any costs that de Lara might have incurred, the matter would go no further. I drew up the apology, for which George Lewis obtained Mr. Guedalla's sanction; it was published, and so the matter ended.

The other case of libel was owing to an article written by one of the most invaluable of Mr. Punch's staff, namely, E. J. Milliken. He was, as I thought, describing an imaginary parliamentary candidate for an East End division. I forget what he called him, but his description was so true as to be remarkably unpleasant to Mr. Gent Davis, the candidate in question. So Mr. Gent Davis, M.P., brought an action, not for damages, not a civil but a criminal action, against the editor of *Punch*, who, accepting the situation and the services of Messrs. Chester & Co., solicitors to the firm of Bradbury & Agnew, excluding the printer and publisher, nobly placed himself in the dock to be stared at by the crowd, to be shot at by hostile counsel, and to be defended,

in the Lord Mayor's Court, by his old Etonian friend and dramatic collaborateur, Montagu Williams, Q.C. Montagu made a most affecting speech, alluding to his ancient comradeship, and saying all sorts of such pleasant things about me, that, had it been Damon defending Pythias or Pythias Damon, no more touching scene could have been imagined. Hearing Montagu Williams everyone present must have concluded that we had lived together all our lives, that we were absolutely inseparables, and that what injured one of us was felt equally by the other, as was the peculiarly apposite case (not cited in his pleadings) of the Twin Corsican Brothers, Louis and Fabian dei Franchi. Policemen sobbed audibly, and ushers wiped away surreptitious tears ; barristers struggled with their emotion, and even the Lord Mayor of London in all his glory bent over his desk and, apparently, occupied himself in making memoranda in order to hide his feelings. Then, with an evidently stifled sigh, the Lord Mayor raised his head and beckoned to an officer of the Court, to whom he sadly handed a piece of paper. Then his Lordship sat back in his chair, casting his eyes upwards towards the ceiling in a prayerful way. Montagu Williams was finishing his great speech, and there was a murmur of applause, which was not suppressed by the Court. Montagu sat down. We wiped our eyes and breathed again. I grasped him warmly by the hand. At that supreme moment the

usher solemnly approached and, just as the Lord Mayor, or the assistant clerk, was informing the public generally that the prisoner (myself) was to be bound over to take his trial at the next sessions in the Ancient Bailey, handed me a note, which I found to be from the Lord Mayor himself to this effect—
"Will you and Montagu Williams give me the pleasure of your company at lunch directly the Court adjourns." Was not this a happy omen? The prisoner at the bar to be invited to breakfast by the judge on the bench!! Never was such a climax! We both accepted the well-intentioned hospitality with great pleasure. I bowed politely from the dock. "From labour to refreshment" as the Freemasons have it, and so all the principals in this Mansion House farcical yet serious drama, adjourned to the Lord Mayor's dining-room, where at an excellent lunch (I sat next to the prosecutor's wife, a very charming lady) the Lord Mayor, Sir Reginald Hanson, Bart. (I forget whether he was "Barted" then or later), genially presided.

"Agree with thine adversary while he is in the way" is the advice given in Holy Writ, and this I for my part determined to do. After a brief consultation in the hall, terms of peace were finally arranged, although the prosecutor, up to the very last seemed to be keeping something up his sleeve by way of a surprise.

"I don't think you'll hear any more of it," said

Montagu Williams to me as we parted at his chambers in the Temple.

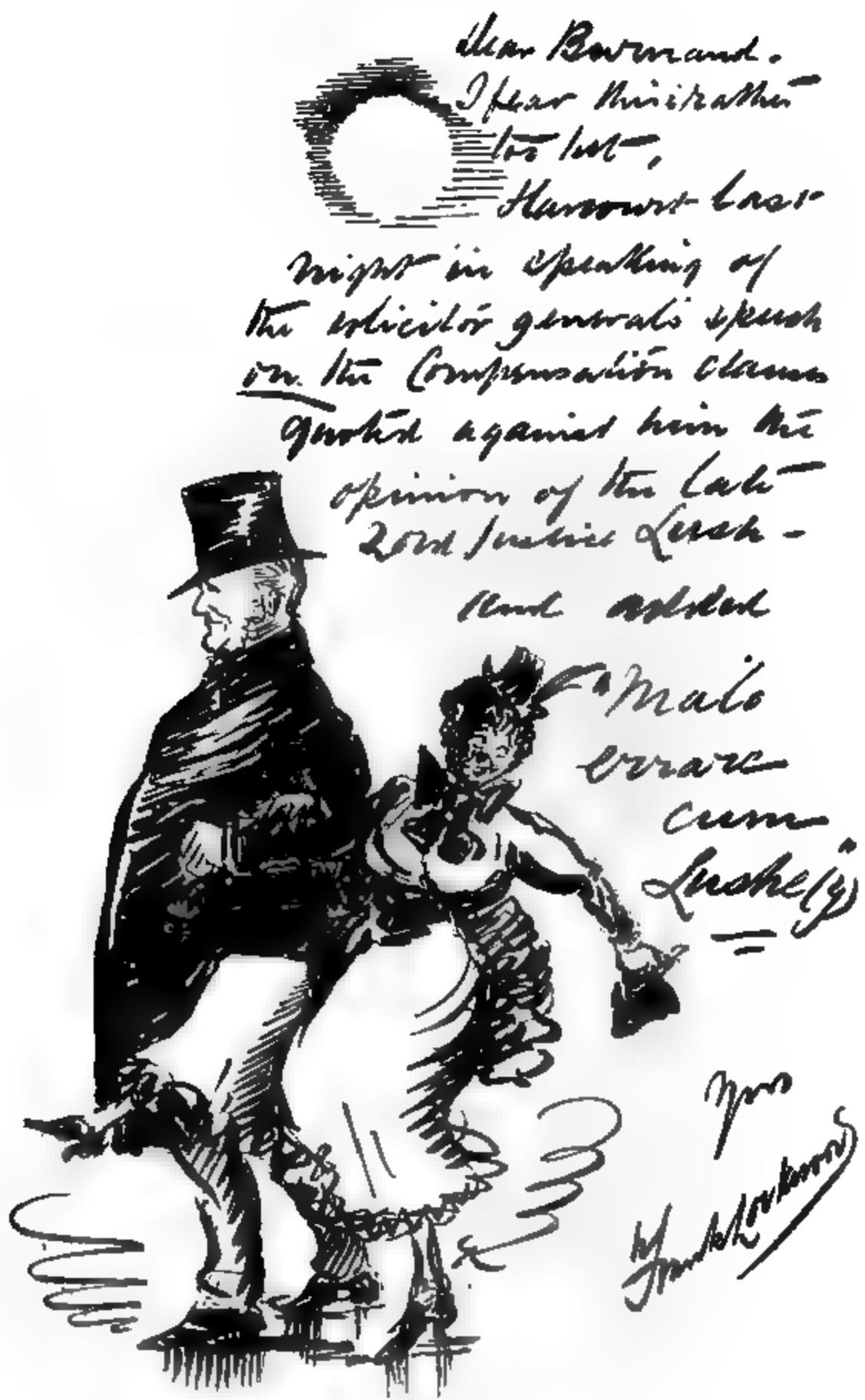
Not a penny would Montagu take for his trouble and for the service he had rendered me. Messrs. Bradbury & Agnew relieved me of their solicitor's bill ; Milliken settled with the firm to the satisfaction of Gent Davis. I forgot to say that in examination poor Milliken practically admitted the authorship of the article, and without withdrawing anything he had written, only regretted that his article should have been the cause of all this trouble. More than this, when the case was over, he wished to accept the responsibility for all expenses incurred. He was very much depressed and worried about it, but highly gratified that it had ended in the Lord Mayor's Court, and that the true bill was not found at the next Old Bailey sessions.

Thank my lucky stars, I have not had much experience of courts of law, whether as barrister, plaintiff, defendant, prosecutor, or prisoner at the bar. When I was compelled to bring an action against two papers, my good friend Frank Lockwood, Q.C., appeared on my behalf in court, the case being heard before Judge Huddlestone, whom I knew slightly but without having the advantage of counting him as among my friends. He was not by any means favourable to me, and with ill grace assented to Frank Lockwood's pleasant proposition, made at my particular request, that I should be allowed to tell

my own story to the gentlemen of the jury in my own way. This I did, and warming to my subject soon came to be on most confidential terms with my special audience of twelve, much to Frank Lockwood's delight. At all events I won both cases. From one I received a cheque which left me a trifle in pocket, sort of fee for my speech, and from the other not a single six-pence, and never heard of him, whoever he was, nor of his paper, whatever it might have been, from that day to this, and never want to. In fact, until I began jotting down these notes the whole matter had gone clean out of my memory, and even now I can only call to mind the "scene in court," Lockwood's cheeriness, Huddlestone's sourness, the jury's attentiveness, but have only the vaguest recollection of what it was all about.

"Why that I cannot tell, said he,
But 'twas a famous victory."

There was one other occasion when I figured as a witness. Charles Wyndham brought an action against somebody or other for something or other, what it was I have not now the remotest idea even if I ever did know anything about it—which I doubt—and I, much against my wish, was subpoenaed. I explained to the solicitor that my evidence could be of no possible value, but as he considered himself (although a solicitor) a better judge of this matter than I could possibly be (he forgot I was a barrister in no practice), I consented, in considera-



PORTRAIT OF SIR RICHARD WEBSTER, NOW LORD ALVERSTONE

J.C.G.

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tion of being paid my two guineas down, to appear for Charles Wyndham's "special benefit." When I arrived in court I saw Wyndham and his son-in-law, who, as I discovered, was the barrister conducting the case for him. I found that I knew everybody on both sides of the question, and so passed from one set to the other chatting with the most judicial fairness. Mr. Justice Day was the judge, the pleasure of whose acquaintance I had enjoyed for some years. When my name was called, I responded, and just as I was about to kiss the book, Mr. Justice Day asked drily, "What is *he* to prove?"

"I don't know, my lord," was my prompt response, cheerfully given.

Wyndham's son-in-law (more "in law" now than ever) rose to explain.

Mr. Justice Day saw nothing in the explanation. However, as it appeared to be the wish of all parties that I should be given a chance, I was sworn, and at once questioned by an elderly Q.C., who happened to be the only person in the case with whom I was not more or less personally acquainted. He asked *me* a question, and before I could answer it, Mr. Justice Day asked *him* another, which was simply,

"What's that got to do with it?"

The elderly Q.C. began to show cause, but Judge Day proved to him in a couple of seconds that, as a matter of fact and of law, my evidence (no disparagement to my veracity of course being implied) was not

worth a small “d” which stands for a penny, and was therefore not by any means good value for the fee I had received.

“Exactly so, my lord,” said I pleasantly, corroborating the judge, who drily ordered me to stand down, which I did with most cheerful alacrity, and left the court “without a stain on my character.” What it was all about I absolutely don’t remember. Perhaps Sir Charles Wyndham also has forgotten it, although at the moment I fancy he was rather disappointed at the collapse of one of his supposed leading *dramatis personæ* in his legal light comedy.

The atmosphere of a court of law “I never could abide,” as Mrs. Brown used to say. To remain in any one of them, with or without a wig, always gave me a headache, and consequently even of those *causes célèbres* whereat I have been present as a spectator, such, for example, as the great Tichborne trial, some theatrical cases, and some others of peculiar interest, I never could remain for more than three or four hours at a stretch, and that amount didn’t suit me for two days running. The great “*Times* versus Fenian Conspiracy” case I heard, that is I “part heard” it, when Lord Russell, then Sir Charles Russell, was at his very best and came off victorious; and I was present during some of the acts of the strange “jewel case” drama, the scene of which was laid in the very house in the Boltons that I have now occupied for some years.

Then Sir Charles was moved to tears ; he had been imposed upon by his own client, and handsomely, frankly, and freely withdrew any aspersions that, by his line of examination which he had been as a duty compelled to adopt, he might have thrown on the fair fame of the chief witness, a lady who had been one of his unhappy but remarkably clever client's dearest friends. I give no names, as I am recalling only these traits in Charles Russell's character as a fearless advocate and a thorough gentleman. He could speak plainly when he liked, and when he considered plain speaking necessary. Herein he much resembled the third editor of *Punch*, who, although a man of good breeding, courteous as a Fellow of a college should be, and an elegant scholar, when stage-managing his own dramas, could be as unpleasantly emphatic as, according to theatrical legends, was the great Ducrow of Astley's Amphitheatre (long, long before my time), or as Macready when carried away by the excitement of the situation ; though no one of these was up to the high-water mark of E. T. Smith, who used dams enough to obstruct anything like a flow of language (and his was strong, peculiar, and original), nor "in it" with John Ryder, a fine actor of "the old Macready school."

"Had a good rehearsal to-day, Tom ?" one would inquire of Taylor.

"Yes," he would reply, "not bad."

"Ah, you *can* drill 'em," observed his friend, who was probably one of the cricketing amateur actors calling themselves the "Old Stagers" of Canterbury.

"Well," quoth Tom, plucking at his beard, a habit he had when talking earnestly; and this was a subject on which he always talked earnestly, being intensely devoted to the drama—specially to his own—"well, you see, *I* am not harsh with them. I know what I want and what they ought to do. And if anyone doesn't understand—and they are, some of 'em, absurdly dense—I carefully explain, and we go over and over it again."

"I should like to be present at one of your rehearsals, Tom."

He was flattered, and took his amateur friend to the Olympic.

Tom rehearsed, Manager Emden occasionally suggesting, but leaving the conduct of affairs mainly to Tom.

The friend, as spectator, was much amused. Up to a certain point Tom was excellent; his directions clear, and his manner pleasant. But as the rehearsal went on, Tom quite forgetting his "friend in front" and losing himself in his energetic stage management, began to thunder and to scare everybody.

There was one man, a "super," who would not, or could not, comprehend the instructions given him *viv& voce* by the author. When Tom had acted the part for him (much to the amusement of the pro-

fessionals, *cela va sans dire*), the unfortunate "super" failed to reproduce the idea. Tom might bear with him for seven times, but to seventy times seven, or anything approaching that total, he could not attain.

Tom mastered himself with great efforts, but almost danced with rage at the man's impenetrable stupidity. At last he turned to Emden and said, "with," what the stage directions in grand opera describe as "suppressed fury," "I'll just speak quietly to that man," and thereupon he went up the stage and took the offender gently by the button-hole in order to arrest his attention. The man was immensely flattered at being singled out for this special mark of courtesy, and became at once "all ears,"—precious long ones, poor chap! Then Tom, still in a state of "suppressed fury" as aforesaid, glared at him from under his bushy eyebrows, and agitating his iron-grey locks straight in front of the flattered "super's" placid countenance, whispered—stage - whispered—severely and emphatically under his very nose—

"My dear sir"—as if he were commencing a polite letter to an utter stranger—"My dear sir, *you're a damned fool.*"

Only this and nothing more.

Then Tom returned to his seat intending to resume rehearsal. The "super" was utterly dumbfounded. Everybody was.

There was a low murmur just such as the stage-

manager of the "Meiningen Troupe" would like to hear from his "crowd" as indicating a rising of the people in the Roman Forum. It increased. Emden knew what it implied.

The rehearsal was momentarily interrupted. Tom was the only unconcerned person on the stage. He had let off his steam and was now quite cool, calm, collected, and absolutely unaware of having given any offence. But Emden plainly told him ; and then Tom who, in effect, was the kindest-hearted creature, went up again to the man, addressed him as a "fellow-artist," and apologised most handsomely to him, and not only to him, but to all the ladies and gentlemen present, specially the ladies, for having been led away by the excitement of the moment. Then all, being much amused, made merry, the ruffled dignity of the injured "super" was smoothed, and the rehearsal went on better than ever, after Tom had addressed them all with one of his favourite phrases, as he heartily rubbed his hands together—

"Now, my lambs, let's get to work again!"

And so "the incident closed."



TOM TAYLOR DRAMATIST JOURNALIST THIRD EDITOR OF *PUNCH*, 1874

L. G. F. R.

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CHAPTER XXX

THE À BECKETTS—WYBROW ROBERTSON—MATT MORGAN—A CHARITY SHOW—*THE TOMAHAWK*—CELEBRATED CARTOON—TOM TAYLOR—DIFFICULTIES—BENNETT—BENEFIT—YATES—SHIRLEY BROOKS—GEORGE SALA—SELF-BURLESQUE—THE BEEFSTEAK—PELLEGRINI—THE ST. JAMES'S CLUB—THE WELLINGTON—SOYER'S SYMPOSIUM—THE COCK—THE COSMOPOLITAN—THE SKIRROWS—CHARLES LAMB KENNEY—JIMMY DAVISON—ARABELLA GODDARD—CLAY—COWEN—SULLIVAN—JOHN OXFORD

I FANCY it was before I was on *Punch's* staff, or at all events very soon after my election to a seat at Mr. Punch's Board, that I made the acquaintance of Arthur à Beckett and of his brothers "Gil" and "Cooky" or "Coco," for I never have learnt exactly which is the correct card, nor have I ever ascertained why he obtained a name which most certainly could not have been bestowed on him by his godfather and godmother at his baptism. Gilbert was the eldest of the three, of a most kindly and gentle disposition, with a cynical turn of wit—most

Tenniel's cartoons and literally trace such likenesses as he required of public characters from them. This he showed me himself, and called it "founding himself on Tenniel." The result, however, was but so-so, and it was only in later years when Matt Morgan joined Arthur à Beckett's staff on *The Tomahawk*, consisting mainly of the à Becketts, Gilbert, Arthur, and occasionally Albert, Frank Marshall, Thomas Gibson Bowles, T. Escott, and one or two others, that he came out as an original but very unequal draughtsman. *The Tomahawk* did daring things, the most daring of all being a big cartoon of an empty chair, showing the throne vacant at a time when Her Majesty Queen Victoria, still mourning for Prince Albert the Good, had not yet felt herself equal to appearing once again among her people and brightening London with her gracious presence. It was an unprovoked attack, and conceived in the worst possible taste. This cartoon helped to accelerate the end of *The Tomahawk*. During its existence it had contrived to get itself disliked by more than one person in a position to have been friendly, and who would have lent a helping hand to the à Beckett Brothers in their journalistic career. Among these was Tom Taylor, most good-natured of men, though mighty obstinate and not ordinarily ready to forgive and forget. The obnoxious cartoon was just one of the obstacles which stood in the way of Arthur à Beckett's

being admitted as even an outside contributor to *Punch*. Besides, Tom Taylor had been attacked in *The Tomahawk*, and having been a personal friend, as well as *collaborateur* on *Punch*, of the father of these young men (namely, Gilbert Abbott à Beckett, magistrate, writer on *The Times*, editor of a satirical paper, *The Age*, I think, author of some of the best things in *Punch*, and dramatist), he felt the attack, and naturally did not care about assisting, or still less meeting, either of the à Beckett Brothers, who at an earlier time, I fancy, had been to a certain extent his *protégés*. Mark Lemon, also, for some reason, of which I have never mastered the details, had declined to have anything to say to the sons of his old friend and *collaborateur*. However, when Arthur showed a talent for sharp writing, combined with a keen appreciation of humour, and when he suggested to me that I might back him up in his application for work on *Punch* to Tom Taylor, I did so with pleasure; and when Tom, in a conversation with me, had stated his reasons for being disinclined to "take on" either of the à Becketts, he, at my request, yielded so far as to receive contributions from either of them; and after a while both Gil (the eldest of the three) and Arthur (the youngest) were invited to occupy two of "the seats of the mighty" at "The Round Table." Arthur came on during Tom Taylor's editorship, but I think that Gil did not join "the

table" until later. Of this, however, I am not quite sure. Poor Gil did excellent work, and died early. To Gil à Beckett's suggestion was entirely, solely, and only due Tenniel's immortal cartoon of "Dropping the Pilot," when the youthful Emperor of Germany accepted the resignation of his father's adviser, Prince Bismarck. I do not remember any other instance of the suggested subject for the cartoon being at once unanimously accepted without argument, contradiction, or discussion. Its applicability, its power, pathos, and simplicity struck everybody at once. It was an inspiration; there was a pause; and then "that's the cartoon" was, *unâ voce*, the verdict of us all. Gil à Beckett's burlesque advertisements were inimitable. No one has succeeded him in this particular line of humour.

When I first knew Arthur à Beckett, he was a handsome youth with curly hair, always bright, and ready to take part in any nonsense that might occur to the light-hearted company in which he found himself. I rather fancy Douglas Straight, afterwards barrister, Indian Judge, and Sir Douglas to boot, young Buckstone, and "Jimmy" Ferguson (Sir James), were of this company. James Molloy the composer came into it later. Tom Archer, as a thoroughly experienced journalist, generally spoken of as "Old Tom," Clement Scott, then working his way into *Daily Telegraphian* criticism, and other Bohemians, were occasionally associated with us in

some of our amusements, though all the journalists whose acquaintance I made at that period still clung to the sanded floor and long clays of Bohemianism, which soon came to be considered as an affectation. We formed a little coterie just betwixt and between the thorough Bohemians of the Arundel Club and the superior order of dramatic authors, actors, and theatrical members of the Garrick. There were two others on the scene with us, Escott, afterwards invaluable to Edmund Yates on *The World*; and Frank Marshall, of whom I have already spoken, who was quite a millionaire among us, as we, if any of us possessed any private means at all, were mainly living on what we could earn by brains and pens. Wybrow Robertson, who married first Miss Milner Gibson, and after her decease Miss Lytton, was also "*de nous*," though in age and experience he was many years the senior of the oldest of us.

It was a great pleasure to me, when I had determined to re-establish *Punch* in Parliament, to find Henry William Lucy ready and, like Barkis, "willin'" to undertake the work. Not even Shirley Brooks, who had been "in the gallery," was so completely in touch with "The House" as our "Toby, M.P. for Barks." And he has been peculiarly lucky in the two artists, Furniss, and after him E. T. Reed, who joined Henry Lucy in his work, sometimes illustrating his text, sometimes drawing according to the artist's own sweet will,

fancy free, and unfettered by Toby or by editor. Harry Furniss was at his very best with Toby for some years, and when he quitted *Punch*, for reasons best understood and appreciated by himself, his place was at once filled by Mr. Reed, who has firmly established himself as *Punch's* parliamentary artist, with only one formidable rival, namely, the inventor and delineator of *Prehistoric Peeps*.

Bennett, in Shirley Brooks' time, was an eccentric genius, and his artistic work is chiefly remarkable for its curiously grotesque humour. He was a middle-aged man when he joined *Punch*, and at various times of his career had been associated with illustrated papers whose *raison d'être* had been antagonism to *Punch*. He was a very quiet man, with a somewhat sad expression of countenance and long black hair, that suggested his being a professional musician, a flute-player for choice perhaps. He spoke, as he laughed, softly. He was a victim of a fixed idea that he was a hopeless invalid, and would die at a certain time. Doctors told him he was quite sound, and that if only he would move to higher ground and live in bracing air, he would be set up for a fairly long life. No, he wouldn't believe it. Once walking away with him at night, after the dinner, he confided this belief to me. He wouldn't change his residence. It was difficult to realise that he was in earnest on the subject, but he undoubtedly

was, and as he had foretold, so it happened. We on the *Punch* staff got up a first-rate benefit for his widow and children, playing at the Adelphi, where *Cox and Box*, libretto'd by myself from Maddison Morton's farce, and set to music by Arthur Sullivan, was done in public for the first time, and at Knowles's T.R., Manchester, for the Bennett Benefit Fund.

Recent mention of the à Becketts reminds me of Edmund Yates who, in *The World*, was at one time constantly sneering at Arthur à Beckett under the title of "The O' Bucket"; but why Edmund was angry with him and how it came about that he, who was so peculiarly alive to all that was humorous and witty, could ever have considered that to convert "à Beckett" into "the O' Bucket," was either humorous or witty, has always been a puzzle to me. It is likely enough that the cause of their quarrel was of no interest to anyone except their two selves, and, after a while, not much even to them.

A propos of quarrels of journalists, Shirley Brooks and George Augustus Sala, after having been friends, and occasionally boon companions, for years, suddenly developed a deadly enmity towards each other. Whether George had been the aggressor or not this deponent cannot say, but well does he remember Shirley's article in *Punch* and the little sketch, unsigned I think, which pointed the application. Sala had been friendly, professionally, towards *Punch*,

but after this he confounded Shirley with the paper, and used to do more than "confound" them both. George Augustus was neutral throughout Tom Taylor's editorship, during which time I had come to know George and to like him much. At one time I had considered that his never having been invited to become a member of the staff, that is one of Mr. Punch's privy councillors at the round table, had been a distinct loss to Mr. Punch; but this opinion became gradually modified on finding how very much on their guard all George Sala's best friends had to be in their intercourse with him, in order to avoid giving him the slightest ground for offence. As a contributor, occasional or regular, and humoured to the full, he was excellent; but as one of the council, at any time, but especially during the autocratic rule of Tom Taylor, I have no hesitation in saying Sala would have been absolutely impossible. The best work he ever did for *Punch* was a paper admirably burlesquing his own style when he was writing two or three columns of gossip weekly in the *Illustrated London News*. He was in himself a fund of information on all sorts of in-the-way and out-of-the-way matters. He was a walking storehouse of useful and useless knowledge; though none of it to him was useless, as there was not one item in his folios of reference that he could not turn to account, no subject on which he could not have written a most readable,

entertaining, and instructive article. The article above alluded to appeared in *Punch*, within, if I remember aright, the first year of my editorship, and it caused many of my friends to shake their heads on seeing me and ask, "My dear fellow, isn't it rather a mistake of yours to attack Sala in *Punch*?"

I admitted that it was. I became very serious.

"Are you and Sala friends?" would be the inquiry.

And my reply invariably was to the effect that we were on the best possible terms, and those who happened to see us pleasantly supping together on a Friday night at the Beefsteak Club after our work was done, prophesied that that fraternal bond would soon be broken. No one ever suspected Sala of being himself the author of the article in *Punch* that burlesqued his own style and manner, and both of us perceived that there was some fun to be got out of our keeping our own counsel. Neither on *Punch*, nor off it at the time, had anyone the slightest suspicion of the truth. One evening, at the Beefsteak Club, the subject having been somehow lugged on to the *tapis*, George requested me politely to name the writer.

"No," I replied, with equal politeness, "I cannot do that without his permission."

"It is a personal attack on me," began George, waxing wrath.

Our *convives* were more or less of my opinion, the more sensible and peacemaking of our friends hastening to point out that the literary style of any well-known and distinguished writer, such as Thackeray had been and George Sala was at that time, was decidedly fair game for the professional jester.

"I join issue," answered Sala, his eyes twinkling and almost betraying his secret by his evident appreciation of the humour of the situation. "I contend that the article is offensive personally, that it deals with matters no writer—no friendly writer—has any excuse for touching upon, and that Burnand as my personal friend, and as editor, ought to have rejected it."

"I don't reject an article that I think extremely clever and brilliant," I said, "especially if, in my judgment, it does no harm to anyone and causes amusement to everyone conversant with the work of the author who is travestied."

"When I was younger," replied George, becoming more and more excited, "I would have pulled the nose of the man who I considered had attacked me." Here our friends laughed nervously, fearing that unpleasant developments were about to disturb the harmony of the club.

"As to nose-pulling," I returned, facing him and regarding George steadily, "it is all very well to talk in that manner, and if as editor I accept the responsibility of the publication of that article, your threat applies to me."

At this point (of the nose) one peacemaker interfered, and said the matter had gone quite far enough, and the subject had better be dropped. After all, whom did it concern? was it a matter worth quarrelling about?

"Personally," I replied, quietly but firmly, "I do not think this or any matter in journalism is worth a duel to the death, nor would I shed one drop of ink over it. But," looking across at George, who was with difficulty repressing his laughter, "if Sala really wishes to carry out his threat he can easily take the affair entirely into his own hands."

"I can," exclaimed George, rising up excitedly, "and I will!"

Everyone jumped to their feet. It seemed as though he were going to assault me there and then! What was their surprise at seeing George, first with one hand, then with the other, *wring his own nose*, and, murmuring humbly, "I apologise," drop down abashed into his seat. They all stared. George burst into one of his shoulder-shaking fits of laughter. All were puzzled, and looked from one to the other for enlightenment.

"At my request," I explained, "George wrote that article himself."

"So you've been selling us all this time!" quoth Edmund Craigie, our excellent raconteur, artistic gourmet, and genial president at our Friday night's suppers. George and myself apologised to every-

body, and drank to their very good health collectively.

Those Beefsteak Nights are among my very pleasantest club recollections. Thither used to come Dick *alias* "Corney Grain," after his musical entertainment what time the German Reeds were "going strong," and Dick Grain had thoroughly established his unique reputation as a worthy successor of John Parry. There, too, was Arthur Blunt, "Arthur Cecil" on the stage, arriving as a rule at about a quarter before midnight at the Old Beefsteak Club (then in King William Street, Charing Cross, next door to what was then Toole's Theatre), and quite the last, with his friend Dick, to leave.

That fine eccentric caricaturist and colourist, Carlo Pellegrini, was a regular attendant and a most amusing companion, his peculiar expressions and his limited knowledge of the best English "as she is spoke," marking him out as a "character" whose kindness and geniality endeared him to all of us. "Ah, my good fellow, I tell you," was the preface with which he would introduce his anecdotes, which, not being remarkable for subtlety of humour, would certainly have lost all the point they possessed had they been told by anyone else than Carlo Pellegrini, "The Pelican," in his own inimitable style. The *Restauration* now widely known as "Pagani's," when it was a little confectioner's where the artists round and about that *Quartier* could get a good and in-

expensive lunch, owed its first start into popularity mainly to Pellegrini ; and the worthy proprietor was so grateful that when the poor "Pelican" died, rich in little else than the fame of his work and the possession in his bureau of some odds and ends with many pawn-tickets, and deep in Pagani's debt, the grateful creditor, remembering that so much of his success was due to Pellegrini, cancelled the debt, and made no claim on such estate as was left. I could mention others who were equally generous. As a Bohemian Pellegrini began, as a Bohemian he ended ; and the greatest kindnesses towards the close of his short life were shown to him by such good-hearted Bohemians as had had the grace to be less careless, less improvident, than the poor "Pelican." It was a sad finish to what might have been a brilliant career.

The incidental mention of "The Beefsteak" reminds me of the various pleasant clubs of which I have been a member, and among them notably was the St. James's. I am speaking of the St. James's when it was situated in St. James's Street. It occupied part of the block that had originally been "Crockford's," and later "The Wellington." This last was a dining place on a large scale, and was first opened in "the Great Exhibition year." Whether it was run as a rival to "Soyer's" at Gore House, known as "The Symposium," or whether it was under the same management, I do not remember; all I know

is that, within my recollection, these two restaurants were the first of the good dining places with a set *menu* consisting of soup, fish, joint, *entrée*, served in the best style at separate tables, and at what would be now termed "popular prices." Hitherto the only "restaurant" I had ever heard of as worthy to be classed with the "*Restaurations*" in Paris, was Verrey's in Regent Street, and that, by reason of the prices, was exclusive. The coffee-rooms of some of the hotels, such as Long's in Bond Street, were very dear, and that of the Piazza in Covent Garden, which was rather more reasonable, had been hitherto mainly patronised by *habitues* and by those who wanted *recherché* dinners away from home; while, ordinarily, City men affected "chop-houses," like "The Cock" at Temple Bar and similar establishments, where the meat and cooking was excellent, and where, as a rule, the draught stout (in pewters), the old Madeira, and the port wine (in pints) were no mean attractions. I can just remember seeing the old "Cock coinage," or, strictly speaking, "tokens"; but I think its limited currency had ceased long before my time. It was not a bad idea for securing and encouraging custom, as the metal counters, stamped with the "Cock" die, would not pass anywhere except at the Cock itself. Say your bill for lunch was three shillings and four-pence, then whether you handed in payment three and sixpence or four shillings, you received the change in "Cock tokens." The waiter would take

his gratuity in this special form, and if the customer came away with any of it in his possession it was useless to him, or to anyone, anywhere except at the Cock, where it would serve as payment, wholly or in part, for lunch or dinner. This coinage of "tokens" was made illegal and so long ago ceased.

There was, and there may be now for aught I know, though I have not seen its name in any recent lists of clubs, a very exclusive literary, artistic, and parliamentary club called "The Cosmopolitan," which consisted of a suite of apartments on the first floor of one of the big houses in a corner of either Berkeley or Grosvenor Square. My first visit there was made in company with Tom Taylor, with whom I was walking towards my home, in Brompton, after a *Punch* dinner. He put me down in the club book as a candidate, and after some time I was elected, but rarely visited it, owing to its only being open during the session, and then, if I remember aright, only at night. After paying the entrance fee and subscription, a member was entitled to "free drinks," consisting of tea, coffee, brandy, whisky and soda. It was a superior sort of free-and-easy, where pipes could be smoked, and where men dropped in from soirées or dinner parties or from the House, and, like King Artaxominous,

"Smoked and drank, then drank and smoked again,"

until the small hours began to grow bigger by degrees. Here I well remember meeting Robert Browning, and having a long talk with Anthony Trollope, who, bearded and rough in manner, struck me as being a rough variation of the Tom Taylor type. Here too I met George Cavendish Bentinck (M.P. and one of the proprietors of the Olympic Theatre at that period), who was very *lié* with Tom Taylor; and I rather fancy that Captain Stracey, well known in theatrical circles, and most of the elder Canterbury Pilgrims (I mean the members of the *corps dramatique* of amateurs styling themselves "The Old Stagers") were among the regular frequenters of this upper Bohemian club. Of course some notabilities whom I there encountered may have been merely casual visitors. I suppose that one of this Club's attractions was that here the pipe could be smoked in peace; for in those days pipes were not allowed in clubs, nor do I think that at that date every club was provided with a comfortable smoking-room; certainly not with such smoking-rooms as now exist, where conversationalists foregather, and where

"The pipe with solemn interposing puff
Makes half a sentence at a time enough."

Even in the Garrick smoking-room in the old Garrick Club, I doubt whether at the period of which I speak the pipe was tolerated.

The mention of "people whom I have met" (as N. P. Willis entitled his amusing book of gossip) at the *Cosmopolitan* reminds me of the occasions when, with Browning, Edmund Yates, George Sala, Arthur Cecil Blunt, the admirable Mrs. Jarrett, and Evelyn Wood (before he was General Sir Evelyn), I dined at the house of the most hospitable Skirrows. Mr. Skirrow, a tall elderly man with a convivial-looking face and a nose that accommodated itself to any amount of snuff, was, I think, "Master Skirrow," one of the taxing-masters in Chancery, an excellent host, as Mrs. Skirrow was a most estimable hostess. Among such *convives* as those above mentioned, the poet Browning was comparatively silent, while George Sala and Edmund Yates were the amusing conversationalists. Browning was about the last man whom anyone, meeting him for the first time, would have taken for a poet. It is expected, generally, of a poet that he should be of somewhat eccentric appearance. He should be above the prevailing fashion in dress, and wear a costume entirely of his own creation and the tailor's make. Now there was nothing about Browning of the Tennysonian ruggedness. He was in every way "neat but not gaudy"; faultlessly dressed, and if there is one epithet above another that could be chosen to exactly describe him it would be the adjective "smug." George Sala would on occasion be effusively courteous in an old-world style. I remember his going down on one

knee to kiss the hand of queenly Mrs. Jarrett as he bade her good-night. But George Augustus when with ladies was always the very quintessence of courtliness. The decease of that amiable couple "The Skirrows" left a blank in a certain semi-literary society which may, since then, have been adequately filled, but not within my personal experience.

Living near us when we were in Russell Square was James Davison, then the well-known musical critic of *The Times*, whom I remember meeting for the first time in company with Charles Lamb Kenney, who introduced us.

To Charles Lamb Kenney I was attached by his *prénoms*. Always a student of the delightful old-world writings of Charles Lamb, I had looked for some resemblance to him in C. L. Kenney. Except that Kenney was quiet and observant, I should say there was no sort of likeness between them. Charles Lamb Kenney's name did a great deal for him, I am sure; he never did much for himself. I remember hearing that he was associated with Albert Smith and another author (I am not sure whether it was not Tom Taylor at his earliest) in an extravaganza that the Keeleys produced at the Haymarket. Two of the *collaborateurs* did all the work, and Kenney was not one of them. Kenney's contribution (I remember Montagu Williams as my authority for this, and he had it

from the Keeleys, who played in the piece; and I think it was produced at the Haymarket under their management) consisted of a single couplet, which was the very best in the piece. It is annoying not to be able to recall the two lines, but I can quite credit the story, as Kenney was, occasionally, epigrammatically brilliant and invariably, because constitutionally, lazy. In the latter part of his life James Davison, above mentioned, found him congenial work in his *Musical Times* (or *Musical World*, I cannot quite fix the name of Jimmy Davison's paper), to which C. L. Kenney was a spasmodic contributor.

Jimmy, that is James, Davison was an extraordinary person. Thackeray's description of Father Prout (Frank Mahony), when he last saw him in Paris, would pretty well apply to the eccentric "J. D." He was snuffy, untidy, dirty, unkempt, brilliant as a musical critic, clever "all round," a master of his pen, and as kindly to those to whom he wished to be kindly as he was nasty towards those whom he personally, or professionally, disliked. He had a fund of anecdote about illustrious musicians, composers, singers, and literary men chiefly connected with the press, which he would dole out during dinner until the patience of his auditors would be exhausted, and they would begin to anathematise the day and hour when their evil genius had prompted them to invite Jimmy to dine

with them. It is difficult for me to call to mind any such bore as was James Davison at table. And he used to begin so well! He had *auctoritas* to back him, and where all were youngsters, or comparatively so as far as he was concerned, the party would, at the commencement of the dinner, hang on his lips, so to speak. But what *did*, literally, "hang on his lips" was the soup, and though we dallied with our plates, and the host and hostess made a feint of continuing the course, yet to keep up the farce for over twenty-five minutes was impossible; so after they had apologised, by saying that "if Mr. Davison didn't mind, we would go on with the next course," to which he would, quite casually, reply, "Don't wait for *me*," and straightway commence his seventh anecdote which the question had brought to his memory, the dinner proceeded. By the time we had arrived at the coffee Jimmy Davison would be messing with the *pièce de résistance*. Several times I dined in his company, and once only he dined with me at my house in Russell Square. When he had departed, my wife and I joined in a duet of "Never again." He liked to encourage the young composers of that time, Arthur Sullivan, Fred. Clay, and Fred. Cowen, and did many a good turn to those who needed one. Remembering Arabella Goddard (whom I saw and heard play at my father's house when I was about sixteen),

I could then quite understand how difficult so clever and so charming a lady, as she appeared to be, found her married life coupled to this thorough Bohemian. No wonder they were separated, for, except the "den" of the late Charles Keene, the eccentric *Punch* artist, unequalled black-and-white draughtsman, and the "study" of old Professor Leigh, I never in my life set foot in such a higgledy-piggledy house, or rather such higgledy-piggledy apartments in any house as those in which I used to find Jimmy Davison in the *quartier* Bloomsbury. Where his personal likes and dislikes were not concerned, his criticisms were reliable; but where there was a bias, then to read between his lines was an absolute necessity in order to get at anything like the truth. Yet for all this he was ever a highly laudatory critic of Arabella Goddard's performances, and, though the separation was inevitable, Jimmy would write always, and speak occasionally, in terms of the highest praise of her, professionally. He was followed in his office by Dr. Hueffer, a clever man, and a most scholarly musician; yet he also, as a critic, was undoubtedly prejudiced. As far as I remember, he but grudgingly admitted the peculiar gift of Arthur Sullivan as composer of light comic opera; but this was, I fancy, through a feeling of annoyance with him for not devoting his talents entirely to serious work. Both Jimmy

Davison and his contemporary dramatic critic in *The Times*, John Oxenford, had one habit in common, and that was of having their private box filled with friends and toadies, and of talking so loud as, not infrequently, to irritate an attentive audience into hushing them down.

CHAPTER XXXI

SOME HOLIDAYS—FORBES AND FONTAINEBLEAU
—FOREST DAYS—AND NIGHTS—MEMORABLE
BARBIZON — MILLET — ANOTHER HOLIDAY
— *PUNCH À PARIS*—A GOOD TIME—KIKI'S
BIRTHPLACES — WHEN ALL THE WORLD
WAS YOUNGER—FRENCH FRIENDS—*RETOUR*

AMONG the few real holidays I have had and thoroughly enjoyed, I count four notable ones, the first being a "treat" given to J. C. Horsley, R.A., and myself by my Uncle Theophilus in the spring of 1870, when, constituting ourselves into the Boömpjes Club, whose motto was taken from the first inscription I noticed at the corner of a street in Amsterdam, yclept "Dam No. 2," we accompanied our president, the aforesaid generous uncle, paymaster and "founder of the feast," to Holland. The second was a similar treat to Aix-les-Bains. The third memorable holiday or "outing" was on the occasion of the proprietors of *Punch* taking such of the staff as wisely accepted their invitation for a three days' jaunt to Paris and back, starting from London 16th May 1889, returning thence on the 19th. This was great fun, and most thoroughly

enjoyable. The fourth notable holiday and quite "one of the best," was given to Du Maurier, Furniss, and myself by James Staats Forbes, one of the shrewdest as well as one of the most amusing and interesting of the prominent "men of the time," who personally conducted us for four days in a piping hot summer, our generous host paying the piper the whole time (as my uncle had done on the two previous occasions), from the moment of our starting until our return to the platform at Victoria. These holidays were all quite unexpected ; that was their first charm.

One evening when dining at my house Forbes was dilating on the pleasures of forest life at Fontainebleau, and of the art treasures he had personally picked up among the works of Millet, Corot, and others of the Barbizon school. Furniss and Du Maurier were thoroughly interested. I had seen some of the gems he had purchased years ago when the works of the Barbizonians were within the reach of anyone who had a small amount of ready cash. I forget what Millet's "Angelus" was sold for originally. However, those who know the true history of this striking picture are aware that Millet parted with it for a very small sum. This Master of Arts in the school of Barbizon did not live long enough to realise the value of his work ; he seems to have been content to paint to live so long as he could live to paint. Forbes took Du

Maurier, Furniss, and myself to Barbizon, and called at Millet's "cottage near the wood," where Madame Millet still resided, and in which the studio was religiously kept just in the same orderly disorder that characterised it when the artist was engaged on his last work.

What delightful drives those were! and what happy careless days! I forget the name of the inn at Fontainebleau where we stayed; it was most comfortable, and an "inn," not a modern hotel—at least at that time. Perhaps *on a change tout cela.*

As guide, philosopher, and friend, whether on tour, or as host and *amphitryon*, no one could possibly have excelled James S. Forbes in his admirable arrangement of times and seasons. He parcelled out entertainments for our days and nights in the most perfect manner possible.

The weather being absolutely of the best, our host made the very most out of the time at our disposal. We wasted no time in Paris, but went straight on to our destination. Our bedrooms looked out on to the hotel garden, and the windows could be kept open all night without fear of wasps, buzzing flies, or gnats. We did not take one single meal indoors, but the table was laid on a small lawn enclosed within four walls of high hedges, in one of which there was an open space serving as the doorway.

"The cool of the morning," wisely observed Staats Forbes, "and the cool of the evening are the best times for the forest, and during the hottest part of the day we can take our *déjeuner à la fourchette* and our *siesta*."

So every morning we rose early, about 6 a.m., then after we had had a cup of chocolate, or coffee, or tea, according to the taste and fancy of the consumer, the harmonious quartette stepped into a carriage drawn by a pair of sturdy horses, and set out for our tour of the forest. So fresh, so pleasant, and gradually so appetising! What struck us all was the entire absence of insects. The silence of the forest was almost overpowering. None of us, however light-hearted we may have been at starting, felt inclined to utter a word, or if we did it was whispered, as we were driven slowly and wonderingly about the forest. Even the driver, accustomed as he must have been to it, was comparatively reverential. We were conscious of being alive in a vast forest where there were no sounds of life, and only at very rare intervals did we come upon a weasel or stoat killed and hung up on a branch by a guardian of the forest as a warning to other predatory stoats and weasels.

No insects, no vermin, no animal life that we could see. Magnificent trees, with here and there a circle of grass cleared as if for fairy revels; a few huts for woodmen; and at the corner of every main

path a stone, on which was engraved a couple of arrows indicating the direction of the road. Without these a stranger to the place would be considerably puzzled to locate himself. The sun was shining brightly, but there was only a chill, grey, even light, like the earliest dawn before sunrise, in which the trees stood out in varied relief; and beyond, where the trees seemed to crowd together and to lose their individuality, all was cold, grey gloom, that seemed to conceal lurking dangers. It was restful, but "the rest was silence."

Then suddenly, as if by magic, the scene changed, and we drove into the very midst of a great surprise. In a second our carriage had turned a corner and we were in full view of sunlit sward! Here, among the ferns and flowers, flitted bright-coloured butterflies and darting dragonflies, while a joyous chorus of birds kept the place alive with their sweet woodland notes. We had come out of the shadow of death into the light and joyousness of life.

"Isn't this marvellous!" exclaimed Forbes, delighted at witnessing our genuine enjoyment of the scene. And marvellous it was. We descended from the carriage and walked about, literally "breathing again." The coachman, too, woke up, hummed a tune, cracked his whip, the sound having no more effect on his horses than the cracking of a joke, laughing heartily as he replied to Kiki's questions;

for Kiki, of the real original "Trilby" days, was a master of such *argot* as the country drivers talk, and specially such as these at Fontainebleau, who knew Barbizon and the merry Bohemian students, and could understand and talk the "language of the schools" of art. So bright a spot as this we were loth to quit; but such appetites as we then had could not be appeased by the loveliest butterflies,—not had they even been bread-and-butterflies,—nor by stories told by the coachman.

"Now, *gentlemen*!" cried Forbes in his most emphatic chairmanlike manner, as though impressing a meeting of genial and unquestioning shareholders.

So farewell to the butterflies and the birds, and quickly through the forest and to our inn, where at eleven o'clock our *déjeuner à la fourchette* was laid for us, *al fresco*, and to it we went as though we had lived but for this particular moment. Every meal was a feast of reason and a flow of soul, whether it were our "breakfast at the fork" or our dinner at the knife and fork. During the heat of the day we reposed: reading perhaps, jotting down notes, not writing, but, as far as action went, doing nothing, lazing, idling, until "boot and saddle" was sounded, when, about 4 p.m. we remounted our carriage and drove to what Shakespeare, in his stage directions to *As You Like It* and other pastoral plays, would have called "another part of the forest." Again the same

grandeur, the same silence ; but we had breakfasted well and wisely, and our view of the forest was a more complacent one ; the nervousness of a first acquaintance had yielded to a quiet admiration, for not at any time, even in our last drive when we had become thoroughly accustomed to the scene, could any amount of familiarity vulgarise the forest, even to the most unpoetic and unimpressionable, and not one of us was in that category.

So we drove till just on eight o'clock, that is, until was sounded "the tocsin of the soul, the dinner bell," and once again was our excellent repast served to us out in the open. Our talk was merry and wise. What stories ! What laughter ! What four irresponsible beings, including even the chairman, our excellent host and most delightful companion.

The shades of night had fallen on us so fast that we had to have a lamp with a shade over it on the table. Of this square meal party Du Maurier made a sketch, which subsequently memorialised the event in *Punch*. "The lamp being here," we argued, "if any flies there be, they'll come and bother us now" ; for I remembered how, in my own garden at Edgware, on a hot summer's night, we had dined out of doors, and the lamp being brought, soon became an object of curiosity to big moths and bats. But here, not a moth, not a bat ; the lamp burned as if we had been indoors in winter-time. To adapt a slang

phrase, at one time in vogue, this was indeed a case of "No Flies."

Then the drive in the moonlight from ten till midnight—magnificent! Words failed us to express to one another the effect of this marvellous scene. If by day the forest is as the forest of the dead, by night it is alive with shadowy forms and phantoms. The only evidence of insect life I remember to have seen here was given by an occasional glow-worm, coming out as "a shining and a burning light," the linkman of the fairies. It was the place to hear the horn of the weird hunter—

“'Tis Lutzow's wild Jäger,
A-hunting they go!”

And then would have been visible the phantom stag followed by spectral hounds and hunter, passing along through the branches of the trees where never mortal quarry and pursuers could venture. However, on no one night during our brief stay were there any ghosts about, visible or audible. No spirits came from the vasty depths cf the forest, and we kept up our own with a sip of old cognac, which had been brought by a thoughtful member of the party qualifying for "an emergency man."

Then the next day, as I have said, we visited Millet's house at Barbizon, and some other places where James Forbes had artistic friends, who, I fancy, were all the better off for his visit by some





A DESIGN FOR FIGURES IN A DRAWING BY CHARLES KEENE

well-judged purchases at first hand without the intervention of the middleman.

The fourth morning, at cock-crow, we left our inn, returned to Paris, and thence to London. The holiday was over, and we bade one another *au revoir*, adding, most heartily, three cheers for our most hospitable and genial entertainer, "the founder of the feast."

Frequent as have been since then my trips to Paris, not once have I had the heart to revisit the glimpses of the moon at Fontainebleau, where we had so pleasant, so irresponsible, so gay and light-hearted a time.

The next memorable holiday was when the proprietors of *Punch*, represented by William Bradbury and William Agnew,—not then baroneted,—took "the staff"—that is, the majority of the staff, as, I think, only Charles Keene, Tenniel, and Lucy ("Toby M.P.") remained behind—for a jaunt to Paris during the Exhibition year, 1889. Our party consisted of *Les deux Guillaumes*—William Bradbury and William Agnew, E. J. Milliken, George du Maurier, Anstey Guthrie, Arthur à Beckett, Laurence Bradbury, Linley Sambourne, Harry Furniss, and myself. Harry Furniss did some excellent outline pictures, devoting one page to a record of all the principal events of our brief sojourn in the gay city. Among other most spirited thumbnail sketches is a small one of a performance at the *Cirque Molier*, which M. Molier had

then recently started. It was (as it is now, I believe, only probably its size may have increased in proportion to its fame) a private circus, to which M. Molier invited his friends, some of whom had permission to bring others with them. There was a strictly private night and a semi-public night, and it was for this latter that some members of the *Punch* staff were fortunate enough to receive invitations through, if I remember right, the courtesy of two well-known black-and-white artists, "Caran d'Ache" (that was his signature, his real name I have forgotten) and Maurice de Bonvoisier (who signs his drawings "Mars"), both of whom happened to be acquaintances of either Sambourne or Du Maurier, or it may have been of both. These two met us in Paris, dined with us, and instructed us in all that was best worth seeing and hearing during our short stay. Milliken wrote a versified account of our "goings on" in the perfectly inimitable style of "'Arry," a personage created by Milliken, and whose popularity grew so rapidly and took so strong a hold of London, "the hub of the universe," that 'Arry soon became as acknowledged a type of a certain class as "snob" and "cad" are acknowledged names of certain characters. Albert Smith, in the 'forties, had given us "the Gent," but "the gent" was a cut above "'Arry," and "the gent" had vanished twenty years before "'Arry" came on the scene. 'Arry, I fancy, will in some form or other, like "the poor," be

"always with us." This verse is very characteristic of English "'Arry à Parry" :—

"What I like about Parry, dear boy, is the general *al frisky* all round (*Al frisky* means out in the open), wherever you sit there's a sound Of fest and *fakers* (that's cabs), rustling leaves, chinking glasses, and song,

And I must say the slappuest lark is to sup at a *Caffy Chantong*."

• • • • •
"At night-time they squat at round tables of marble, mate, under green trees,

The Frenchies, men, women, and young 'uns, in parties of twos and of threes.

Buz-wuz goes the Bullyard bustle, click-clack go the *Voytunes*, and loud

Above leaf-rustle, glass-chink, and chat sounds the tramp of the orderly crowd."

The entire poem is admirable, full of life and go, and records in 'Arry's own language just the very things that 'Arry and no other would have done, thought, and said. In this same number Anstey Guthrie's dramatic dialogue, between "Britons" at a Parisian *café chantant*, is delightfully humorous. It forms one of his well-known "*Voces Populi*" series.

It was on this occasion that, when we were out for a drive towards Passy, Du Maurier, who had not stayed in Paris for some years, pointed out place after place as being "where I was born." He started by selecting a small but attractive suburban residence as the scene, at once identified by him beyond "possible doubt," of his first appearance on the world's

stage; but after we had proceeded some little distance, during which time his countenance wore an anxious expression, he suddenly exclaimed, "No! I was wrong. *That*," pointing to a house much more attractive-looking than the first, "is where I was born." We were all much interested; indeed, we stopped the coachman, toasted Kiki in light drinks at a cabaret, giving a *pourboire* to the coachman, who drank *à la santé de Monsieur*, to which Kiki returned in a neat speech, partly in English and partly in French, for the benefit of his compatriot the coachman, and then we resumed our drive, and Kiki relapsed into silence. Again the puzzled expression returned, and scarcely had we proceeded some three-quarters of a mile when he called out, "*Cocher ! Halte-là !*"

Then he stood up in the carriage, and pointing to a large pretentious-looking house situated in an extensive well-kept garden with a fountain in the centre, he exclaimed with conviction—

"No, I was wrong, *mes amis, j'avais tort !* This is where I was born. There's the fountain, there are the green shutters! and in *that* room— You understand. Just at the corner, if my memory is not defective, should be a hostelrie where we might drink to the memory of those happy days, for the road is awfully dusty, and I never remember having experienced such a thirst."

"Kiki, *mon cher*," I observed, as we complied

with his request, "you must have been brought up on the bottle."

"Yes," he returned gravely, "and when I visit the scenes of my childhood the old instinct returns. *Cocher, un bock, hein?*"

We descended again, William Bradbury, Sambourne, Kiki, and myself. Having poured out our second libations to the *genius loci*, i.e. Du Maurier, we proceeded on our way. Kiki became exceedingly meditative, and we were all in that sleepy stage which, invariable during a long drive, has been so admirably described by Dickens when he sent Mr. Pickwick to Bath by coach. However, we had not jogged on for more than twenty minutes when Kiki awoke, and, as if soliloquising, muttered, "No, no. I was wrong. Absurdly wrong. But I see my mistake."

"Where?" asked one of us slightly aroused. William Bradbury, alert, repeated the question, and we all, with eyes now wide open, followed the direction indicated by Kiki, who was pointing to a fine mansion, approached by a drive, standing, as the auctioneers say, "in its own park-like grounds." It was just at the entrance of the village, the boundary of which was marked by a trim-looking and superior kind of *auberge*.

"Yes," exclaimed Kiki, "the other places were mistakes. It is so difficult to remember the exact spot where one was born. But there can be no

doubt about this. *Cocher ! Arrêtez ! s'il vous plaît.*" And he was about to open the door and descend—we had drawn up at the *auberge*—when William Bradbury stopped him.

"No, you don't, Kiki," said William jovially, "you've been born in three or four places already, and we've drunk your health in every one of 'em ; so we won't do it again till you've quite made up your mind where you *were* born."

In vain Kiki protested with comic earnestness.

"I say, old chap," he expostulated, "you bring us out for a holiday, you take us about everywhere, and you won't let a chap be born where he likes ?"

But William was inexorable ; the door was closed, the coachman grinned, cracked his whip, and away we went again.

Du Maurier pretended to grumble, and remonstrated with William on what he called his tyranny.

"Why," he said, "there are lots of nice places to be born in about here. Of course the first was a mere barn of a place compared with this." Then he explained, "*You see our family has got on a bit in the world, and I'm choosing a place I would have been born in if I had to be born now.*"

On the way back to our hotel, finding that we all sided with William Bradbury and objected to pulling up at every inn in order to toast the occasion of his

birth, he assumed an air of intense disgust, declared that he "didn't care where he was born"; and finally, as we were passing a tumble-down sort of shanty "*à louer*," he said, "There! *that's* where I was born! it's not worth while getting out and drinking a '*Punch d'honneur*'!"

Then being in excellent spirits he burst out into song with a *jödel* to it whereof the burden was—

"O come up with me to the mountain
And walk in the dew of the mo-or-or-nin'!
I'll show you the grotto and fountain
And also the place I was bo-or-orn in.
Tulla *Li-ety*."

Poor Kiki, what fun he was at such times as these! and I never remember having seen him so boyish, so "Trilbyish," as on the occasion of our memorable visit to Paris.

The *Figaro* of Jeudi, 27 Juin 1889, recorded Mr. Punch's visit to Paris, and seeing the day on which it was issued, the *Rédacteur-en-chef* with his special knowledge of faulty English pronunciation of French, might aptly have headed the paragraph "*Punch et Jeudi*," but he didn't, and here is the plain unvarnished "par."

"Nos confrères du *Punch*, dont nous avons reçu la visite sur la tour, n'ont pas perdu de temps. Le numéro de cette semaine consiste en 32 pages avec le supplément :

M. Punch à Paris.

L'état-major du *Punch* est parti de Londres le 16 et y était de retour le 19, et sa copie et ses gravures étaient sous presse le 22, avec les résultats de l'excursion '*Punch à Paris*,' qui a été écrit et dessiné à Paris."

CHAPTER XXXII

SOTHERN'S *DUNDREARY*—CATCH PHRASES—
BISHOP COLENSO—THEOLOGICAL PAMPHLET
—EXTRACTS—E. T. SMITH—FRIEND TOMMY—
ADAH ISAACS MENKEN—ASTLEY'S—*MAZEPPA*
—STARTLING SITUATION—SMITH TO THE
RESCUE—SATISFACTORY FINISH

ONE man in his time plays many parts, and if that man happens to be a "ready writer," and an impulsive thinker, he, at various odd moments, pens and publishes a lot of stuff that the world would willingly let die, however heartily at the moment they may have applauded the success. Here is an instance in point. At one time between 1861 and 1862 (I being twenty-five years of age and, of course, wise at that) there was a great stir in the learned theological department of the English Church about the works of Dr. Colenso, Bishop of Natal, who had not a little scandalised his co-religionists by the publication of his "views" on the Pentateuch. These views were, it was at that time considered, dreadfully unorthodox. There was great fluttering in the Anglican dovecots. Now it so happened that at this period Sothern as *Lord Dundreary* at

the Haymarket, in Tom Taylor's play called *Our American Cousin*, was at the height of his popularity. Lord Dundreary pervaded society; he was quoted in papers; he was imitated in conversation. In fact, not since the great comedian Liston appeared as *Paul Pry*, before the present reminiscenter was born or thought of, and had uttered the magic words, "I hope I don't intrude," had the "catch phrase" of any theatrical character obtained such a hold on the public. Theatre-goers may remember in later years how that drollest of droll comedians, John Lawrence Toole, made his comic apology "Excuse my glove" popular everywhere. Lord Dundreary said many absurd things, but the one that came to stay, and that remained long after the original had been forgotten, was his lordship's summing up of any argument or statement, with the phrase, "but that's the sort o' thing no fellow can understand," which was uttered by Sothern with a lisp and a stutter, as with glass fixed in his right eye he stared in a helplessly puzzle-headed sort of manner, quite inimitable, at the audience.

Now I had been, as a "mere layman," interested in the Colenso case, and, as being myself outside Anglicanism, I could not but be struck by the utter absence of any authoritative utterance which should be universally accepted by Anglicans of all parties, ritualistic, high, moderate, low and lowest, as decisive of, or as temporarily silencing, the controversy. It is

of small importance nowadays ; and the question of heterodoxy itself does not come into my province ; as a matter of fact, it never did ; and, upon my word, it now strikes me that *Lord Dundreary utterly refuting Bishop Colenso* was by far and away the most judicious method of treating a question which, *primarily*, concerned only theological students.

So as one who might be erroneously in this instance described as belonging to a certain class that proverbially rush in “where angels fear to tread,” I took up my parable in shape of a pamphlet, which I am bound to say did not take me more than a couple of hours to write (I did it in chambers of which my friend “Charley” Coleman gave me the use in ancient days when I was still hovering about “brief-land”), and which I took to a law publisher in Chancery Lane, mainly because he happened to be handy), and obtained from him cash down (not a particularly large sum, but it sufficed) for the pamphlet, which, being published, had a wonderful vogue and ran into thousands. He made his profit of about a hundred per cent., and I didn’t grudge it him, as the publication was a risk, and the result, after all, might have been *nil*. This was the Preface, which was headed

“To THE REFLECTIVE PUBLIC.

“ It is with feelings of the greatest respect for its talented and noble author that I lay this Pamphlet

before a deep-thinking and critical generation. His lordship first distinguished himself as an acute and careful student in a theological examination at the SISTER UNIVERSITY, where he finished (and very quickly too) his educational course. His lordship was asked by an examiner, 'What is the connecting link between the Old and New Testament?' After some minutes of profound thought the aristocratic candidate for the highest academical honours made this memorable reply :—

"The—the—the—connecting link wath when—when Peter cut off the ear—cut off the ear—of—of—of—Malachi, the latht of the Pwopheth."

"After this specimen of the noble lord's accuracy it would be superfluous for us for one moment to question his ability as a subtle adversary of the learned and accurate Bishop of Natal."

Of course the whole point in this was the implied doubt of the learning and accuracy of Dr. Colenso by placing him on a level with Dundreary. As a matter of fact, the bishop had been severely handled by some of the leaders of the orthodox High Church party.

A few of his erudite lordship's observations are worth recording; he says—

"To find out what the good bookth are, you'll have to wead a lot of bad oneth, you know—and then take your—take your thoithe."

Dundreary used not only to stutter and pronounce

his "r"'s as "w"'s, but he used to hesitate in his speech and pause for some seconds before he surprised you with his conclusions. The pamphlet therefore "told" better when read aloud by anyone capable of imitating the Dundreary method. His lordship took an initial objection to Colenso; he wrote—

"I thaid I don't like that Co—Co—Colenthoo; he invented au—au—awithmetic when I wath a boy; and hith book of tableth uthed to puthle—puthle me tho. But now I think I—I—I can turn the tableth on him—*tableth*—don't you thee? Oh! that'th good—that'th good."

Dundreary's surprised delight at his own jokes was one of the salient features of Sothern's performance. He goes on—

"It' th a vewy—vewy funny thing about thith Bithop; he—he—he went out to con—con—vert the Thuluth; and the—the Thuluth converted *him*."

Then he says, alluding to the exodus of the Israelites, which was one of Dr. Colenso's points—

"Tho the Bithop findth a lot of difficulty in the number of people who went out of Egypt, all the—all the huthbandth and wiveth, and daughterth, and thonth, and all their thonth and their daughterth, and their fatherth and m—m—motherth for thome—thomething like twenty-two mileth (p. 63)."

"*Anther.* There'th nothing—nothing in thith. I'll puthle him with thomething—thomething more

curiouth than thith. It'th a thort—a thort of widdle,—‘Ath I wath going to Thaint Iveth’ (I never, I never did go there, you know; but it ithn’t *me*, you know, it’th—it’th any feller), ‘I met a man with theven wiveth’ (that’th—that’th vewy impwoper)”—

Then follows a footnote thus—

“The apparent impropriety of a plurality of wives, at which this scrupulous scion of the aristocracy is so highly indignant, has been treated with much charitable feeling and characteristic large-heartedness by the Bishop of Natal in a letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury. His Lordship can scarcely be ignorant of the fact put before us by Canon Stanley in his *Eastern Church* (p. 13), viz. that the polygamy of the Jewish Church lingers here (*i.e.* in the Abyssinian, the most conservative of Christian societies, founded in the fourth century by the Church of Alexandria), ‘after having been banished from the rest of the Christian world.’ Of this existing state of affairs the learned Canon subsequently says, ‘In the Church of Abyssinia we shall find . . . a complete sacrifice of the spirit of Christianity to the letter.’ And yet Polygamy is still an offence punishable by the laws of England. Surely our Legislature, professing to be actuated by the *spirit*, might yet make some concession to the *letter* of Christianity.”

There were only eight pages of this pamphlet, which was “price threepence,” and it was in this

semi-serious tone throughout. It "went" enormously, but who nowadays cares one-sixth part of the selling price of this *brochure* for Colenso and his discoveries which were not so vastly original as to have escaped Voltaire, in the eighteenth century, when he was answered by an abbé, whose name escapes me, writing in the name of a Jewish Rabbi and his friends. Colenso, Voltaire, and all the ancient objections will be forthcoming from time to time, as will the answers and refutations.

I have already mentioned my recollection of Astley's amphitheatre as the only circus in London, and as the home of the equestrian drama in the days of the great ringmaster, Widdicomb. At a later period (1864) I call to mind a memorable evening there when Adah Isaacs Menken played *Mazeppa* in the once highly popular equestrian melodrama of that name (of which an admirable burlesque was written by H. J. Byron of the Olympic, with "little Robson" as the hero), when Astley's, or, as it was generally called by its principal supporters on the Surrey side of the water, "Hashley's," was under the management of E. T. Smith, who had hoped to revive the palmy days of equestrian drama, and to put it again on its four legs. He reproduced *Mazeppa*, a drama, intimately associated with this circus-theatre, and announced as a startling novelty that Miss Adah Isaacs Menken would appear in the title-rôle. This eccentric actress was

not a handsome woman, for though she had very fine eyes, her nose was well-nigh as shapeless as that of a rather damaged prize-fighter, a defect that cannot as a rule be easily bridged over. But Menken was an exception ; she was intelligent, her eyes spoke when she didn't care to speak for herself, and her figure was superbly proportioned. In her closely fitting "fleshings," which were perfect as "a tight fit," she looked in this character a marvelously fine female acrobat, but no more a male Mazeppa than was Hamlet a Hercules. It was not "her face" but her figure that was "her fortune," and for some time, though I do not think it was for a very long run, she "drew the town." At this time I had a commission in hand for E. T. Smith to do a showy extravaganza for Christmas or Easter, and I had selected for plot the story of *Boabdil El Chico* (with second title of "or, The Moor the Merrier"), which was to be placed on the stage in most magnificent style. I do not remember it ever having been intended that Menken should be in it, but anyway I had frequently to see E. T. Smith (his eccentricities were to me a constant source of amusement), and to talk to him about certain stage effects, costumes, scenery, and engagements.

One night when I had to see "E. T." on business, I had dined with a friend, a man of about my own age, but one who, having a turn for theatrical enterprises, had travelled far in search of them, and

having been interested in theatrical "specs" in America and Australia, was acquainted with most of the "stars," fixed and wandering. As I understood him to say he had not seen *Mazeppa* for years, and as he mentioned Menken in a most casual manner, I suggested that he should take this opportunity of seeing this rather remarkable actress, and give me the pleasure of his company in my box, where I expected the manager to meet me and talk business. At first my friend refused, on the ground that an Astleian performance always gave him a headache, that is in time past when there was much gunpowder burnt on the stage, which mixed unpleasantly with a mushroomy sort of smell of damp sawdust in the front of the house; but on my solemnly assuring him that there was no gunpowder used in *Mazeppa*, and that the new Astley's theatre was quite a different place to what the "old Astley's" had been, he consented to accompany me.

"By the way," I said, as an extra inducement, "if you like, I'll get E. T. Smith to take us round and introduce you to Menken."

"Thanks," he replied rather curtly; "I know *her*. I don't particularly care about her—personally. Met her in Australia." And he said no more on the subject.

I didn't give the matter another thought. We went to Astley's, and were in plenty of time for

Menken's entrance. She was certainly magnificent, but there was too much of her; her accent was, it struck me, somewhat American, with a tinge of cockney twang slightly obscured by an affectation of speaking broken English. To what country she belonged I never knew for certain, and though her *prénoms*, "Adah Isaacs," were decidedly Jewish, yet her features had no Hebraic characteristics, unless indeed her magnificent eyes may be reckoned as such.

"I suppose she is 'on' the whole time?" asked my friend indifferently.

"Yes, as far as I remembered the play. Mazeppa," I said, "was on the whole time. You see," I explained, "as, during several scenes he is tied to a horse, he is bound to be."

He appeared satisfied at this, and asked no further questions. His silence I attributed to the interest he was taking in the play and to his wish to see as much of Adah Isaacs as was possible: and in this respect, as her costume was of the very scantiest, his wish was fairly gratified.

He sat behind the side curtain of the box, protesting that the strong glare tried his eyes.

Miss Mazeppa occasionally looked up at our box, but as she knew me slightly, I attributed her rapid glances to her wish to catch my eye in case I should feel inclined to give her a notice in any paper for which I might happen to have been writing.

In the middle of an act a messenger came round to the box, and addressing me, said, "The guv'nor 'tickyly wishes to see you, sir."

Whereupon, business being business, and needing no excuse to my friend, I descended by a side staircase leading directly on to the stage, and made my way to the manager's room. Menken had just finished her scene, and her dresser at the wing was putting a cloak over her shoulders. We saluted one another, and then she asked, quite casually, "Who's that in the box with you?"

I told her, and excused myself for quitting her abruptly, as E. T. Smith was expecting me on business. So we parted, and I hurried off to the manager's room, where E. T. Smith, being an off-hand man of business (which description has invariably meant for me, through life, that when dealing with "an off-hand man of business" I have never got the better of any bargain), soon settled the matter to his own satisfaction, and temporarily, no doubt, to mine; our interview did not last many minutes. As I was leaving E. T. Smith asked me—

"Who's with you in the box?"

Evidently he also was interested in my companion just as Menken had been. I told him. Smith laughed grimly.

"Ah," he said, "I thought so. Menken spotted him. She owes Tommy one, I fancy."

And he laughed sardonically.

E. T.'s manner, when speaking of my friend as "Tommy," conveyed to me the impression that he knew more about "Tommy" than he cared to say. So, out of pardonable curiosity, I inquired how it came about that, as he had just expressed it, "Menken owed Tommy one?"

"Well," answered Smith, without the smallest hesitation, and rather chuckling over his own narration, which was, by the way, ornamented by certain figures of speech not fitted for any decently conducted pot-house (but this was in the exercise of a kind of "poetic licence" which he had granted to himself for the use of occasional "damnatory clauses"), "Tommy was running a theatre somewhere in South America or Australia,—it doesn't matter where, for Menken's been pretty well everywhere—she began very early, and I think she married a prize-fighting chap—however, that's neither here nor there—no more is he,—and of course Master Tommy had to work the star system for all it was worth. Somehow he got his dates muddled—his acting manager told me all about it—and he found he had engaged a Madame Blanqui (she was a Mrs.—ah—I forget—doesn't matter—doosid handsome woman, never came over here—died quite young) in the very middle of Menken's season. Darling Adah, who was always either desperately in love or diabolically revengeful, had chosen the former course with regard to friend Tommy; and so, when he in a doose of a nervous state came to her to

propose an amicable arrangement of performances to be divided between Madame Blanqui and herself, she astonished him by consenting off-hand to play alternate nights with a few extra matinées thrown in, a benefit or two, and in a general way some extra profit to herself, which was all right and square enough. But she was artful; getting so much leisure to herself, she intended to devote it to the unreciprocating Tommy. There was the difficulty; *he* failed to appreciate her evident partiality for him at anything like its proper value. He wasn't "on in that scene," and didn't mean to be, as there was metal more attractive elsewhere, and *that* wasn't Madame Blanqui. However, that's neither here nor there, though I happen to know that Tommy's engaged, and has been for some time.

"However, Menken made up her mind that his indifference to her was occasioned by his admiration of the Blanqui lady; and when that bright particular star came on to the scene, handsome as they're made, though in form not in it with Menken, all the fat was in the fire. Menken flew into a violent temper,—and by Jove she can when she likes (though I've got the whip-hand of her, she'll knuckle in to me —curious—but fact), and she actually threatened Master Tommy's life. She was mad with jealousy, and raging at his indifference. Tommy got wind of this, and he did the best thing he could in the circumstances: he bolted. Not a word of *au revoir*,

not a letter, not a sign. Tommy made himself scarce. Soon afterwards Menken, having finished her engagement at friend Tommy's show, went to fresh fields and pastures new ; but Tommy cut the whole affair, became disgusted with theatrical matters, and having sold his theatre, lock, stock, and barrel, and sold it well too, he returned to the little village of London, and I don't suppose he has seen Menken, or Menken him, from that day to this."

"Ah," I said, "I see why Tommy objected to come round and renew her acquaintance."

"Quite right," said Smith severely ; "I won't have no bloomin' nonsense in my theatre. Tell him I'll come up and have a chat after the next act."

Charged with this message I went off, not exploding but chuckling with laughter over what I had just heard, and anxious to hear Tommy's version of the story. I ran up the little iron staircase leading from the stage to the door of our box which, however, did not yield to pressure. It was locked on the inside.

I tapped sharply. In response it was opened abruptly by someone behind it, while facing me in the corner, standing behind a chair, and looking uncommonly sulky and generally uncomfortable, stood Tommy. I was about to ask him why he had locked the door, when I was startled by a strange voice—a woman's—speaking with a queer sort of

foreign accent, which I recognised at once as Menken's. She had closed the door with a bang, and wrapped "with her martial cloak around her," she was standing in front of it, barring the way with a shining dagger in her hand. Awfully melodramatic, but, at such close quarters, not precisely pleasant. I knew she was a woman who wouldn't stick at trifles, but I felt instinctively that as regarded her, Tommy was not included in that category.

She ignored me, except to acknowledge me with a nod as a witness, and addressed herself to him. Her eyes flashed more brilliantly than her dagger, and in other and far different circumstances they would have had quite a killing effect. Now they gleamed murderously ; and I felt that I should not improve matters by presuming on my very slight acquaintance with her to ask politely (and soothingly) after her health, or to congratulate her (suavely) on her histrionic success. As Jeames has it, "For the moment I was non-plussed."

I couldn't interfere ; I had no right to ask questions, for "who had constituted me a ruler and a judge" over Menken and her Tommy,—that is if Tommy could be legally claimed by her? I could only watch events, and wait until there was an opening for the intervention of diplomacy.

Then she resumed the vituperation which my entrance had temporarily interrupted. Menken was a fine natural tragedian, and never had I seen her

do anything on the stage half or a quarter as powerful as her performance at this moment in private life, and in a private box.

Tommy, behind the chair, with his eye fixed warily on Menken's dagger, interrupted, protested; all to no purpose. Then some excuse that he made, very sulkily, for having done the right thing at the wrong moment, irritated her to such an extent, that, losing all control of herself she raised her dagger, took one step back in order to spring forward like an angry tigress, and so to hurl herself with greater force on him, when the door was pushed open, and, between the victim and the avenger, appeared the red shock-head of the humpbacked Quasimodo-like call-boy, who in a husky tone said—

“Oh, I thay, Mith Menken, thtageth waitth.”

This business-like lisping announcement of “stage waits” was emphasised by a stamping of feet among the audience, demonstrating considerable impatience in “the front of the house.”

Then the gallery began shouting “Time! Time!”

Whether Adah Isaacs would have been prevented in her course of deadly vengeance by even a conflagration I cannot determine, as at this moment E. T. Smith himself burst into the box, knocking aside “shock-headed Peter,” the call-boy, and saying in a tone that admitted of no sort of question—

“Here, I say, Menken, get out!”

He had suddenly reverted to the time of his

existence in a former state as a policeman, when he had been used to order the "casual" to "move on—now—out of this!" His tone and action were most appropriate.

So without more ado and without a remonstrance on the part of the raging Adah, he gripped her wrist, and, as the dangerous weapon fell harmlessly to the ground, he swung her round out of the door, pushing her down the staircase as he kept close at her heels. I followed to see the end of it. In another second, she had cast aside her mantle, and was on the stage kissing both hands apologetically to the impatient audience, who now generously and enthusiastically testified their forgiveness of her on the spot.

Smith remained on the stage, at "the wing"; he did not intend to leave her to herself until the piece was over and the theatre closed. As far as Tommy went, Smith's watch and ward over Adah were not required, as when I returned to the box, Tommy had vanished.

The next day I called on Tommy to have a chat with him on the last night's proceedings, but he had left town early, and the servant was unable to inform me either as to his whereabouts or as to his return. I should imagine that his return to London was timed according to the public announcements of the engagements of Adah Isaacs Menken.

I saw her on business once before she left

England, but the business came to nothing, and I heard but little of her for some time; spasmodically her name would crop up, and then it “was heard no more.” As for Tommy,—well, according to the old formula for finishing a story, “he married and lived happily ever afterwards.”

CHAPTER XXXIII

THE STORY OF A PRACTICAL JOKE—*DRAMATIS PERSONÆ*—THE LOCALITY—TIME—MEREST CHANCE—THE INITIATIVE—GILBERT—SCOTT—WILSON—THE FUN BEGINS—PROCEEDS—THE DINNER—ANIMATED CONVERSATION—EVIDENCE OF THREE WITNESSES—ATTESTATIONS—THE WAVERER CONVINCED—“DO YOU FOLLOW ME, WATSON?”—HIS MESSAGE—ADIEU—ALL ENDS WELL

I THINK, and am glad to think it true, that “practical joking,” such as we may read of in the memoirs of Theodore Hook and in his own novel of *Gilbert Gurney*, has nowadays gone quite out of fashion. It is a dangerous game at the best, however amusing for the moment. The last professional practical joker of my acquaintance was Edward Sothern, who, with his friend and collaborator in this sort of amusement, Mr. Addison, a stock-broker I fancy, was never tired of amusing himself at the expense of various persons, I won’t style them “his friends,” because a confirmed practical joker is too dangerous a person to be ever treated seriously

as a true friend. But "there *are* chords," as Mr. Guppy was wont to observe, and there are occasions, rare and, to rightly constituted minds of a humorous turn, irresistible.

It was in 1875 that Mr. Henry M. Stanley, now Sir Henry Stanley, had undertaken, at the instance and at the expense of the proprietors of the *Daily Telegraph*, Mr. J. M. Levy and his eldest son, Edward L. Lawson, now Sir Edward, Bart., and of Gordon Bennett, of the *New York Herald*, to explore the dark continent of Africa; and thus it happened that when towards the latter half of 1878 his two volumes were published, entitled *Through the Dark Continent*, Stanley had been the celebrity of the year, and of course the Lion—the African Lion—of the Season. His return synchronised with the bringing of Cleopatra's Needle from Egypt, for which, in due time, a suitable place was to be found on the Embankment. In the number of *Punch* for 2nd February 1878 there is a picture occupying about two-thirds of a page, commemorating the double event, and representing Henry M. Stanley and Cleopatra's Needle together.

I had the pleasure of Mr. Stanley's acquaintance, having met him at dinner on more than one memorable occasion, including *soirées* at Sir Francis and Lady Jeune's, which were always among the most enjoyable, as they were certainly

the most interesting of all the entertainments given during the season. At "the Jeunes" you met everybody who was anybody and rarely anybody who only thought himself somebody. Not to have the *entrée* to "the Jeunes" was to argue yourself unknown. But this by the way. It was before Stanley went out on his second exploration that I had made his acquaintance, which, as recounted above, I took the earliest opportunity of renewing on his return in 1877. And à propos of Mr. Stanley I may mention *en passant* that I shall have something to tell of a certain Garrick Club festivity, when Sir Henry Irving was our host; but *on reviendra à nos moutons*, when the present trifling anecdote shall be completed. Suffice that in 1878 Mr. Stanley was in London, was being fêted, and that Mr. Linley Sambourne had paid public tribute to his popularity by giving a humorous likeness of him in *Punch*.

Now it chanced that about this time my wife and I, being hospitably inclined, had arranged a little dinner party, one among the many, which were the causes of much comfort and joy to us and, as I trust, to many others who were good enough to come and enliven us and add, in a particular way, to the gaiety of Russell Square, No. 64, where we then resided. Thursday, the 28th February, was the day fixed. At this time

my old friend, Frederick C. Wilson, was staying with us.

Now, as luck has it, Linley Sambourne, with wonderful prescience, has actually preserved his reply to our invitation (he answered for himself and wife), which I returned to him, for reasons which will shortly appear. We wished him to meet Mr. and Mrs. W. S. Gilbert, and Mr. and Mrs. Sambourne, Alfred E. Watson, on *The Standard* as dramatic and musical critic and sporting contributor, Clement Scott, notable dramatic critic, and Mrs. Clement Scott. That was our party.

At all events I have given the principal *dramatis personæ*.

When writing to invite Linley Sambourne I had asked him in a mysterious style to "come and meet a distinguished person," — naming no names.

Now when I thus wrote, inspired by some jocose spirit at my elbow, I must have meant by "a distinguished person," either Fred. Wilson, who was a stranger to Linley Sambourne, and for whose special entertainment this dinner party had been projected, or Alfred Watson, who, to the best of my knowledge and belief, was not personally acquainted with Linley Sambourne, nor Sambourne with him.

I myself incline to the opinion that I originally meant Fred. Wilson; but anyway here are the two

sides to a question in *facsimile*, Mr. Sambourne's answer on a single sheet:—

11. 30. p.m.
18. Staff. June.
m

Dear Frank.

We shall be delighted
to come. Eric Stanley?
at 7.30. sharp.

Yours,

Lily Sambourne.

Tomorrow. Thurs.

I'm summoned on a
special duty for the
28th no. shan't go.

. 20. July 72.

My note at the back was written when, *some days after the party*, the whole matter was cleared up, and I returned him his acceptance, which had, in

point of fact, been the *fons et origo* of the practical joke.

Dear Samm:
Here is your own
suggestion for
the Stanley De-
-ception

Yours
FRB

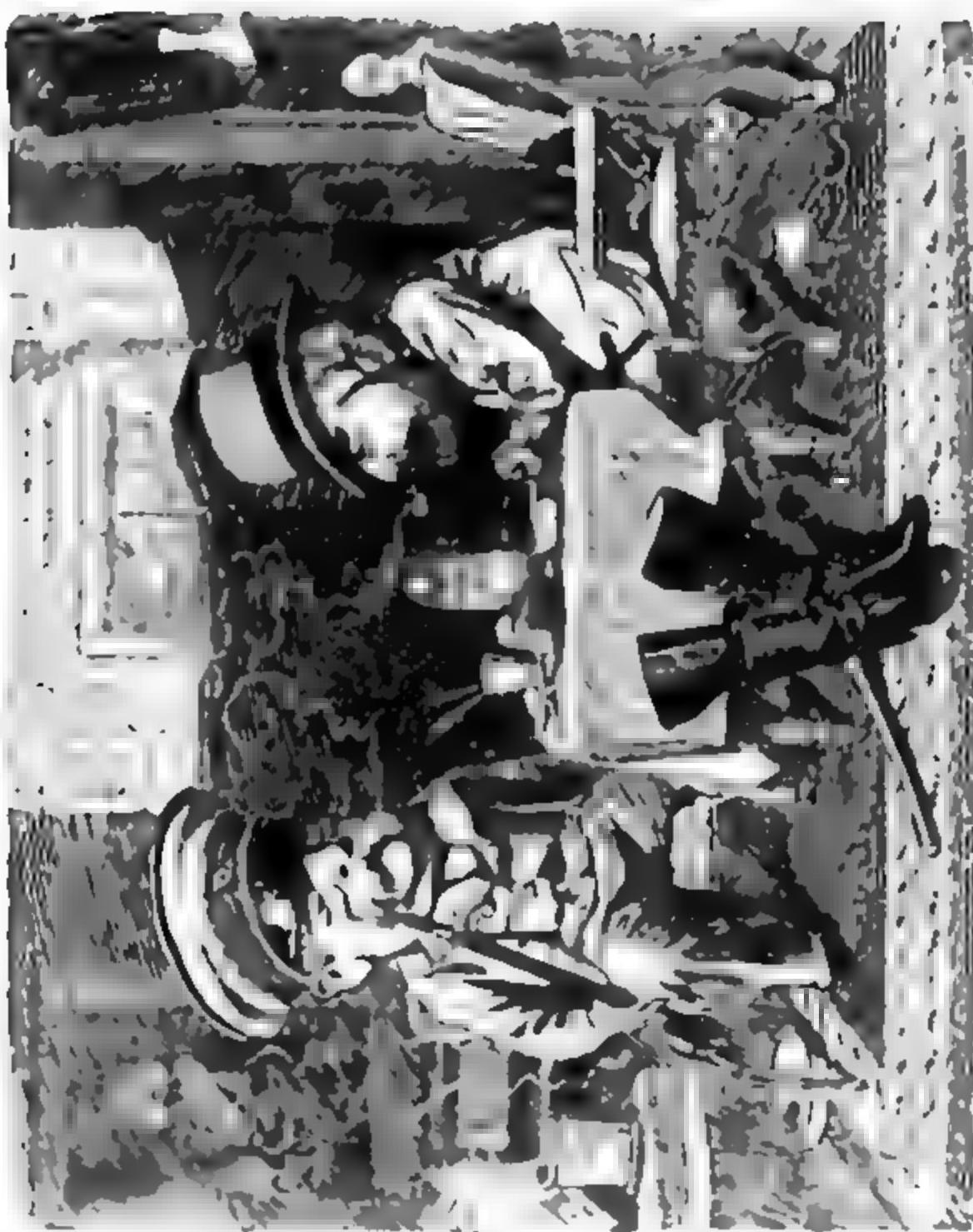
In reply to a letter inquiring whether I was correct in including Clement Scott among the party on the memorable "Watson - Stanley - Sambourne night" at 64 Russell Square, I received this characteristic telegram—

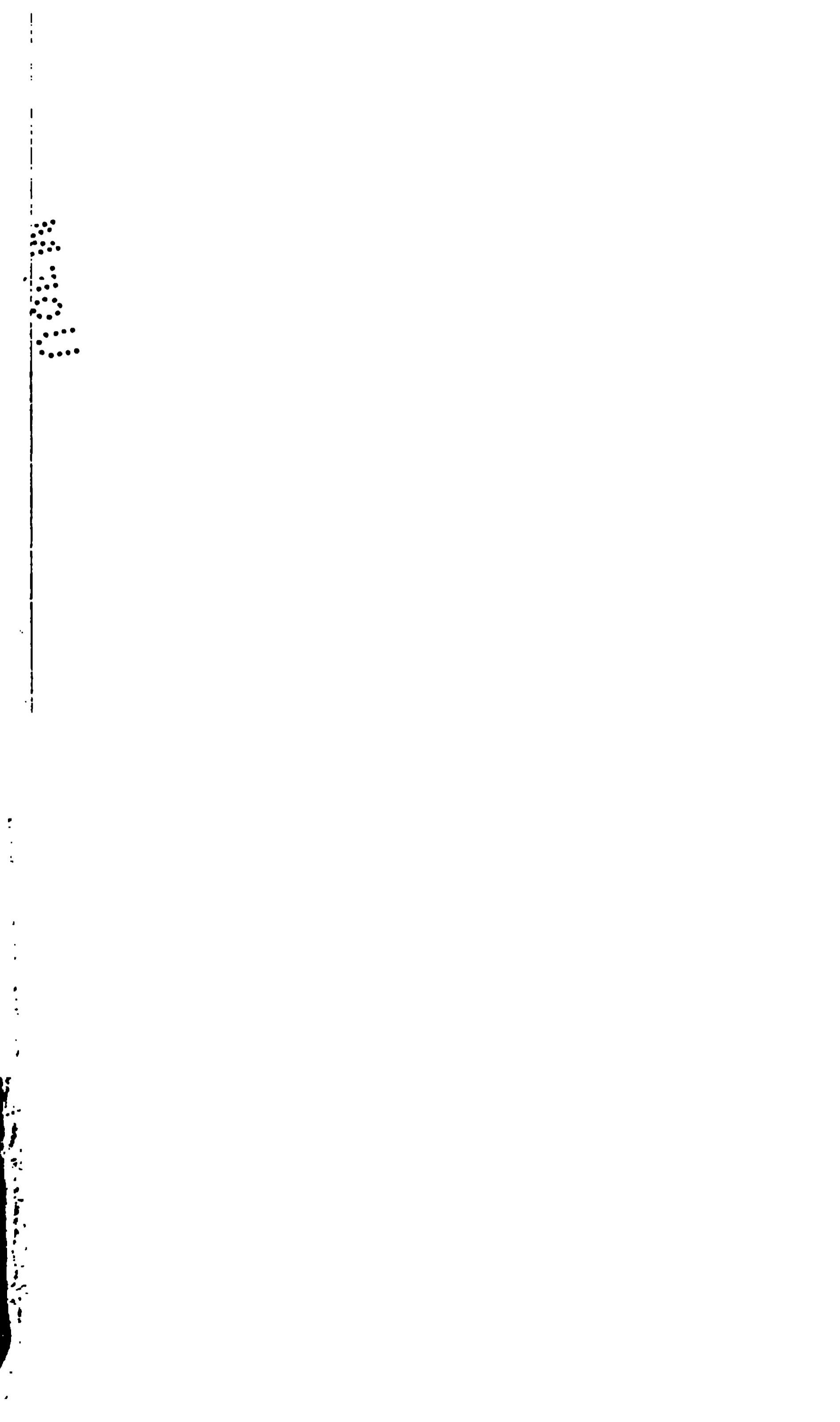
"TORRINGTON PLACE, 9.35 A.M.

"I should just think I was one of that party, rather, and never shall I forget it. God bless you, old friend.—Yours ever,

"CLEMENT SCOTT."

A DRAWING OF A LITTLE CHILD SITTING AND READING AND THE ACTION OF HAPPY THOUGHTS
BETWEEN FRIENDS AND MOTHER AND THE ACTION OF IMAGINARY CONVERSATION





Now as my *dramatis persona* are all assembled I may ring up and begin the play.

On receiving my invitation, Linley Sambourne jumped to the conclusion that Stanley, the explorer, *must* be the distinguished individual he was invited to meet. No doubt Mrs. Sambourne, on being consulted, quite agreed with her husband as to the individuality of the "distinguished person" in question. Moreover, in her goodness of heart, Mrs. Sambourne considered our action as "so kind, because she had a brother out in Africa, and," she added as a really happy thought—

"I will wear that necklace, with those pendants, and the beautiful bracelets made of corals and gold and shells and such curious things, that he (the brother alluded to above) sent me from Africa. Mr. Stanley will be *so* interested in them, and *as I suppose they are the sort of things worn out there* it will make him feel quite at home!"

Such Mrs. Sambourne has since informed me was the special motive for so arraying herself, and indeed the ornaments being of rare and remarkable beauty would anywhere have attracted considerable attention. Of course Stanley, it was expected, would regard them with almost affectionate curiosity; nay, these adornments, for aught Mrs. Sambourne knew, might have been the property of some dark lady in whom the great traveller had had more than a mere platonic and passing interest. Each bead might

have its own tale to tell; only if it had, as there were about two hundred of them—well—we should have been in for a sort of "African Nights' Entertainment." Anyway the ornaments were to be duly worn by Mrs. Sambourne for the special delectation of the "distinguished individual."

So, as has been seen, our invitation was accepted in the terms above recorded. On receipt of Linley Sambourne's answer I had, for the moment, quite forgotten my own letter, but his emphasised reply at once recalled its terms to me.

"He thinks he is going to meet Stanley," I said to my wife, and begged her on no account to acquaint Mrs. Sambourne with the actual fact. Not a word was to be said about it. Beyond his disappointment, when, "all agog" to meet the great African explorer, he should encounter only a brother sportsman (for both he and Alfred Watson were ever keen on hunting and shooting), who was also a dramatic critic (a calling in literature that had no particular interest for "our artist"), there was really not much fun to be got out of the situation, "when you came to think of it," and, naturally enough, as I was pretty well occupied with minding my own business, the subject did not recur to me until the very night of our dinner party, and even then only at the last moment, when I adjured my wife not on any account to let the cat out of the bag in a sympathetic confidence to Mrs. Sambourne, should that lady arrive

with her husband before the appearance of Alfred Watson, who was on this occasion to fill the principal rôle.

As luck would have it, Mr. and Mrs. Gilbert, Fred. Wilson, the Clement Scotts, and ourselves were all in the drawing-room, talking over the matter, some few minutes before the arrival of either the Sambournes or Alfred Watson.

Now in this recital, as a confession of culpability, I am not going to shirk any responsibility whatever, nor am I going to claim the unearned reward of merit. To whom belongs the initiative of the jest, whether it was Gilbert who suggested that, as Sambourne expected to meet Stanley and would be disappointed if there were not a Stanley ready to receive him, and *therefore* a Stanley *ought* at all hazards to be provided for him, in the person of Alfred Watson, or whether, without more ado, there being very little time to be lost, the arrival of both Sambourne and Watson being expected every minute, I, suddenly inspired by a "happy thought," exclaimed to my guests, "Let's pretend that Watson is Stanley!" I cannot positively assert. But, from whomsoever the proposal emanated, I am quite certain that it was at once acclaimed by all present, enjoying the joke prodigiously by anticipation. The ladies graciously acquiesced and undertook to play their parts to the very best of their abilities, promising that on no account and at no time during the evening would

they divulge the plot. Should Alfred Watson arrive first, he was to be immediately told for what part he had been cast; but should the Sambournes precede him, then I was to forestall Alfred Watson's entrance into the drawing-room by running downstairs and meeting him in the hall. The leading actor would not have any time "to study his part," but would be compelled to play it all, as the children say in a nursery charade, "out of his own head."

Scarcely had the conspirators determined on the plot than the door opened and Mr. and Mrs. Sambourne were announced. After the first ordinary civilities, and Linley Sambourne had been introduced to Fred. Wilson, who was the only person in the room with whom he was unacquainted, and whom he regarded suspiciously, he turned to me, and after a careful scrutiny all round he observed—

"Then Stanley hasn't come, eh?"

"Not yet," I answered, and begging to be excused for a minute I left the room just in time to prevent the servant (this *contretemps* we had not foreseen and provided for in our suddenly arranged and anything but "cunningly devised" plot) from announcing "Mr. Watson."

During my temporary absence Gilbert discussed Stanley with Sambourne, who informed him that he had "never actually seen Stanley, but had quite recently drawn a caricature of him in *Punch* from a

photograph." Gilbert adroitly pointed out to him the unreliable character of any photograph, and admitted that "for his part *he* would not be at all surprised were the real Stanley to prove a very different person from what any photographs of him had led us to expect." To this Sambourne quite agreed, as an artist naturally would, when he has not drawn from the living original.

In the meantime I had met Alfred Watson in the hall and had arrested the servant on the staircase, saying that I would myself take the gentleman into the drawing-room.

"*Alfredo mio!*" I exclaimed breathlessly, "here's a lark! Sambourne expects to meet Stanley."

"Oh, does he?" responded Alfred pleasantly; then added, "I shall be delighted to meet Sambourne."

"Don't you know him?" I asked very anxiously.

"Never seen him," answered Alfred.

"Capital!" I exclaimed, being very much relieved by this admission. Then I added immediately, and with the utmost earnestness, "Look here, old chap, *you've got to be introduced as Stanley.*"

"What Stanley?" asked Alfred a bit puzzled. "Stanley of Alderley?"

"No, no!" I whispered excitedly in his ear as we ascended the staircase, "Stanley the explorer."

"But I don't know Stanley the explorer," pleaded Alfred Watson faintly.

"That doesn't matter," I replied decidedly, and by that time we were just on the drawing-room landing, and before Alfred could give vent to any further expostulations I opened wide the door and announced "Mr. Stanley!"

At once my wife advanced and Stanley was presented, then to Mrs. Gilbert, then to Mrs. Sambourne, then to Mrs. Clement Scott, who all smiled most graciously on him; Mrs. Sambourne quietly congratulating herself on her foresight in having donned the African *bijouterie* already mentioned. How interested he would be! and to what strange tales of a traveller would not these articles of African *luxe* lead!

It had been arranged that though the guest of the evening would take the hostess down to dinner, yet that he should then be so placed at table as to have Mrs. Sambourne on his right, while Gilbert would be opposite to him and Sambourne would have a fair view of him from the corner. As dinner was announced within a few minutes after "Mr. Stanley's" arrival, there was no time for an "awkward pause" before the announcement of dinner introduced us to a change of scene with which the second act of the farcical comedy commenced; I leading off with Mrs. Gilbert, Gilbert taking Mrs. Sambourne, F. C. Wilson taking Mrs. Clement Scott, while Sambourne found himself going down meditatively alone, following and closely observing Mr. Stanley, the guest of

the evening, as he descended with my wife on his arm. Before leaving the drawing-room Sambourne had already confided to Fred. Wilson that Stanley was not a bit like the portraits of him he had seen, nor, he added, "does he resemble the photograph from which I drew his picture in *Punch*."

As far as I, being host, was concerned, I had pretty well made up my mind to carry the jest no further than our sitting down to dinner. I will here interpolate my friend Alfred Watson's own account of the incident, which he has penned at my earnest request. It is as follows:—

"Not quite seeing the point of the joke, I went up with you to the drawing-room, where you presented me as Mr. Stanley to a lady, Mrs. Sambourne. I was too confused at the moment to realise the position of affairs; and the admiration, not to say reverence, with which Mrs. Sambourne acknowledged the introduction did not tend to make matters easier. We started off downstairs, and on the way she looked at me and remarked with much fervour, 'Oh, Mr. Stanley, I do think your voyage down the Congo was the most daring feat in the annals of adventure!' I could only very modestly reply, 'Oh, not at all!—which was perhaps a little too conventional entirely to meet the situation. When we sat down to dinner I was sorely tempted to say, 'You know this is one of Frank Burnand's jokes; I am not really Stanley.' A course of hero-worship is extremely embarrassing.

to the wrong hero, but I was afraid she would be angry at the deception I had already so innocently practised. There was such a twinkle in your eye, moreover, that it seemed a pity to upset what you evidently regarded as an excellent joke, though I am not sure I cordially agreed with you, and I felt the thing had got to go on."

So far Alfred Watson's narrative. Evidently the opportune moment for "owning up" had not offered itself, and so my first intention was abandoned. I had now but to wait events.

I had fully intended to acknowledge the guilt, take the entire responsibility of the deception on my own shoulders, and then introduce Watson as himself to Sambourne and the company generally. But it was not so to be. Conversation started at once, became instantly general, and Mr. Stanley was in the very thick of it, plunged into it by ingenuous Mrs. Sambourne, who could not restrain her Desdemona-like curiosity to hear, from this hero at her elbow, his account of—

"Moving accidents by flood and field."

"
"Of the cannibals that each other eat,

The Anthropophagi, and men whose heads
Do grow beneath their shoulders."

"These things to hear did" Mrs. Sambourne "seriously incline," and it was not long before she seized upon an opportunity for expatiating upon her

African golden ornaments, now *en evidence*, and telling him of her brother in Africa, whom “possibly, Mr. Stanley,” she added, “you may have met.”

“No,” said the pseudo-Stanley in quite a casual manner. “No, I didn’t meet him.”

“But,” said Gilbert, cutting in across the table, while from his corner the lynx-eyed artist Sambourne was curiously scrutinising every line on the expressive countenance of the celebrity whose features he had so recently caricatured in *Punch*—“but I think, Mrs. Sambourne, your brother was at Ikondu, was he not?”

“I fancy that *was* the name,” replied Mrs. Sambourne pleasantly, “but those names are so difficult!”

“They *are* difficult,” observed “our Mr. Stanley,” seeing a loophole out of his present difficulty.

“Ikondu is difficult for *us*,” said Gilbert, with great politeness; “but Mr. Stanley, I am sure, can find no difficulty in pronouncing these names. I read your book, Mr. Stanley, with the greatest possible interest,” he added.

The unfortunate Stanley bowed bashfully, and made some futile attempt at changing the conversation. But Gilbert wouldn’t hear of it.

“By the way, Mr. Stanley,” he asked, with every appearance of a deeply interested scholar at the feet of a professor, “I had a long discussion the other day as to the correct way of pronouncing”—here he spelt the word letter by letter—“M T A G A M O Y O?”

"Oh," answered Stanley rather nonplussed, but making a ready-witted effort to get out of the difficulty, "it's not pronounced as spelt!"

"*That*," returned Gilbert courteously, "I presumed. But how *is* it pronounced?" This question he put most deferentially and with intense earnestness.

"*How* did you say it *was* spelt?" inquired the representative of Stanley. Poor Alfred! wishing to gain time and to put Gilbert off the track.

"M T A G A M O Y O," answers Gilbert distinctly, sticking to his spelling and the name. I found afterwards that Gilbert had been much interested in Stanley's first book, and, having a wonderfully retentive memory, he had remembered these outlandish names which, no doubt, appealed strongly to the author of *King Borria Bungalee Boo* and *The Three Kings of Chickesaboo*, which are to be found in the ever-delightful *Bab Ballads*.

"Almost impossible to pronounce it correctly in English," explained Alfred Watson, with a troubled look as if searching for a happy illustration of his meaning; "but say 'Mtagamoyo' and you'll be near enough." And then he turned to Mrs. Sambourne, who observed that "the pronunciation of African native names must at first have appeared almost impossible for a foreigner to master." To which Mr. Stanley readily assented, and attempted a diversion of the conversation in favour of the opera, theatrical amusements, and the coming Derby, as subjects on

which Alfred Watson *in propria persona* could have expatiated as one "having authority," and also as "a scribe," but in which as the African explorer he could not be supposed to take any sincere interest. However, his move in that direction was stopped at once by Gilbert, who, always with an air of the deepest interest, inquired of him—

"From what African port, Mr. Stanley," this most deferentially, "did you commence your explorations?"

"Well," replied Alfred Watson, not quite certain of his ground, and wishing to place himself on some friendly shore with which he might have some sort of acquaintance, however slight—"well, I—er started from New York."

"That's scarcely an *African* port," observed Gilbert, with a quiet smile, as though ready to appreciate any joke that Mr. Stanley might be pleased to try.

"No, it is not," returned Alfred, looking a trifle annoyed, while everyone round the table felt that it seemed rather presumptuous of Gilbert to correct any geographical statement whatever that Mr. Stanley, the great traveller and explorer, might make.

"I asked," resumed Gilbert, with the utmost deference, "from what *African* port you had started?"

"Ah! I beg your pardon," replied Alfred Watson. "Yes—quite so." Then cleverly getting round the question he said, "I landed at"—here occurred a

slight pause, everyone at table silent, anxiously listening for the forthcoming narrative. Then Alfred burst on us with "M'bobo"; adding immediately, in a tone that indicated a slight contempt for his questioner's ignorance, "Most people know that."

Gilbert bowed. "Interesting spot, I believe?" I put interrogatively.

The pseudo-Stanley was not to be caught so easily. He foresaw that had he replied in the affirmative Gilbert would have pressed him for all the details that made "M'bobo" interesting. So Alfred Watson answered briefly—

"No, not at all; very ordinary."

But Gilbert pursued the subject, and was not going to be put off with a short answer.

"And in which direction, Mr. Stanley," he continued earnestly, as if wishing to correct some false notions of his own on the subject, "did you then travel?"

We were all most attentive. There was very little conversation, except *sotto voce*, by way of commentary on Mr. Stanley's marvellous adventures, the ladies agreeing with Mrs. Sambourne that it was all "most interesting!"

Alfred Watson hesitated a bit, as if recalling his voyages, and then he answered, "We sailed up the river Quorra as far as Gamboya."

Excellent names these! certainly a score for Alfred. How we kept our countenances I don't

know. Some of us didn't, but these pretended either to be temporarily suffering from "something having gone the wrong way" or they apologised for laughing at something somebody else had just said.

"Gamboya!" repeated Gilbert, as though the name recalled some weird memory. "Ah!" he went on, "that's where the crocodiles swarmed, wasn't it?"

Several of us were troubled at this moment with severe coughs, which only champagne could relieve.

"Not crocodiles," retorted Alfred, recovering himself with a violent effort. By the way, the fact that Stanley never addressed his interlocutor as "Mr. Gilbert" impressed Sambourne with the natural roughness of a traveller who had been for so long a time in uncivilised society.

"Not crocodiles," said Alfred pleasantly, correcting Gilbert; "alligators."

"I thought there wouldn't be crocodiles about there," observed Sambourne cautiously, and still eyeing the supposed Stanley with considerable curiosity, tempered with a remaining spice of doubt.

"You suffered much from the climate I presume?" put in Clement Scott, just to relieve the situation.

"Of course," said Stanley, and they took wine together.

Alfred was turning to his fair neighbour, and attempting a diversion from the rather wearisome topic of his travels, when up came Gilbert again, fresher than ever, with—

bourne had meantime been gazing at me fixedly, and when we resumed our seats said, in a somewhat apologetic tone, ‘I am afraid I didn’t hit you off very happily in *Punch* last week, Mr. Stanley. But looking at you carefully, I think I see what I missed. I shall make a better likeness of you next time! ’

“I rather wondered whether Stanley’s friends would agree with him when they saw the next picture; but you, generously backing up a collaborateur, declared that you did not think it was at all a bad likeness, and Sambourne agreed with you that it was not *bad*, only it might have been better.

“After a kindly inquiry as to my health, and a remark that I was losing some of the bronze from my complexion, you began some remarks about accent—as I suspect with a vague desire to make me ‘play up.’ You said I had so far got over the American tone and phraseology that it was possible not everyone would recognise me as an American; but Sambourne did not agree to this. He confessed that my American accent was not very strong, ‘but anybody,’ he said, ‘could tell I was not an Englishman.’ ”

At this point, having temporarily exhausted Africa, “Gilbert started a discussion” (as Alfred Watson, from whose narrative I still quote, remembers) “on the relative merits of British and American journalism, complaining bitterly of the treatment dramatists received in this country from

the venality, bias, incompetence, malice, and general iniquity of the critics. ‘There was a creature,’ he declared, ‘called Alfred Watson, employed by the *Standard*, who was a model of everything a critic ought *not* to be ; if American playwrights were forced to submit their work to the *quasi-judgment* of such a writer as this he was sincerely sorry for them, and only hoped that a healthier state of things prevailed on the other side of the Atlantic. So great was the evil fame of this Alfred Watson that Gilbert was certain I *must* have heard of him.’” Alfred, always in the character of Stanley, replied that he believed he *had* heard his name, but did not think he was that sort of person ; to which Gilbert retorted, “Evidently you do not know him.”

At this point I proposed an adjournment to the drawing-room, much to the chagrin of Linley Sambourne, who had been for the last few moments furtively attempting to make a thumb-nail sketch of the supposed Stanley on his wristband, and had not yet “got him” to his entire satisfaction. However, it was so contrived that Fred. Wilson should accompany Sambourne upstairs, both talking of Stanley, and saying what an unpretentious, pleasant, interesting, and amusing fellow he was, while Clement Scott, Gilbert, and I remained below, struggling with irrepressible laughter, and trying to induce Alfred Watson, who, with his back to the wall, was literally doubled up, to come upstairs with us and join the

ladies. But this point-blank he refused to do, and, having secured his hat and coat, literally made a bolt for it, his departing message to Sambourne being that, "Mr. Stanley was so delighted to have met him and so sorry he could not stop, being solemnly engaged to appear at a *soirée* given by the Geographical Society."

"That," says my deponent, Alfred Watson, "is the history, so far as I can recollect it, of my first and only appearance as an African explorer."

Soon after this the party broke up, but before Linley Sambourne left I, bent upon making a clean breast of it, said to him confidentially—

"I say; old chap, you didn't think it really was Stanley?" And then I imparted to him how the real Simon Pure was Alfred Watson.

Linley Sambourne's answer quite disconcerted me and clinched the matter there and then.

"My dear Frank," he replied, shaking his head with the most knowing air in the world, "you can't humbug *me*. No! No! It won't do. *I know Stanley when I see him.*"

The case was hopeless.

Mrs. Sambourne thanked us sincerely for a most delightfully interesting evening, and I felt uncommonly guilty ; the letter I have already given showing how I explained to Linley Sambourne that the jest had originated with *his own suggestion*.

For some weeks "relations were somewhat

strained " between us, but Mr. and Mrs. Sambourne being the kindest people, took a lenient view of the case, and when on an early occasion we were invited to dine at their house, the only revenge they took was to put on their card that this "was *not* to meet Mr. Stanley."

Alfred Watson has forgiven everything and forgotten nothing, and in this year of "grace after dinner" we are all alive to tell the tale and to enjoy a hearty laugh over the old story.

CHAPTER XXXIV

**RUSTEM PACHA — FEZ — MOSLEMS — CHRISTIANS
— RICHARD BURTON — STANLEY — IRVING —
A GARRICK DINNER — A LONG SITTING —
HERKOMER — PORTRAIT — ARRANGEMENT IN
BLACK AND WHITE — SITTINGS — LULU LAND —
INVENTIVE GENIUS — THEATRICAL IMPROVE-
MENTS — EXPERIMENTS — AUGUSTUS HARRIS
— APPRECIATION**

RUSTEM PACHA, Turkish Ambassador, I used frequently to meet at the cheery dinners given to excellent *convives* by Dr. Robson Roose. His Excellency was a great friend of the doctor's, whom therefore we, for the nonce, christened "Robson Roose-tem Pasha." When Rustem, who was a Catholic, "Catholique et Romain," first came to England, he went to hear mass at the Oratory. Being an unpretentious, self-effacing person, His Excellency gave no notice to the Oratorians of his intention of "assisting" at the High Mass, consequently no special instructions were issued to the "green-coat men," who see to the seating of the Oratory's congregation. So Rustem went, wearing, as is the custom of the East, his *fez*, and seated

himself among the male division of the congregation, which is there divided on "the sheep and goats" principle, though nowadays, I think, this arrangement applies only to the central block of seats in their fine church. No sooner did the sharp eye of a "green-coat" espy the red *fez* of Rustem Pacha than he was up to him and down on him.

"You must take off your hat, sir," orders the green-coat man, with plain Hibernian accent.

Rustem, unfamiliar with English, especially when spoken by an Irishman, does not clearly understand.

"Your hat," says official green-coat, indicating the *fez*. "Can't sit here in church with your hat on."

Rustem, the wise and politic, seeing that argument with an ignoramus would be useless, rises quietly from his seat, makes his reverence to the altar, doing duty from hand to mouth, and simply withdraws. As Rustem himself, much amused by the incident, told me this story, I may here repeat it and vouch for it on his authority as fact. "I disremember entirely," as the green-coat might have said, whether he ever heard mass at the Oratory again on a high day, or on any special occasion; but if he did, he probably warned the Oratorian fathers beforehand, and I trust that "green-coat" received a severe reprimand.

Rustem, whose conversation was always most interesting, told me how in their devotions the Mohammedans everywhere put to shame the Christians.

"They never disguise their religion," he said to me. "Wherever they are, whatever they are doing or talking about, and no matter what may be the company in which they find themselves, down at certain hours they go on a little piece of carpet, and say their prayers."

I replied to this, that frequently had I seen ecclesiastics, and occasionally some lay people, both at home and abroad, stop in their conversation at the sound of the Angelus bell, or at the striking of midday, and at six in the evening, to say their Angelus.

"Ecclesiastics perhaps," returned Rustem, "but how many lay people?"

"Very few," I admitted.

"But with the Mohammedans, wherever they may be, it is the rule not the exception, I think," added His Excellency; "and in various ways they set a good example to all Christians."

And it is not merely from Rustem Pacha that I have heard this. Sir Richard Burton, the great Eastern traveller, who in disguise entered a mosque and went through the pilgrimage to the shrine at Mecca, told me the same thing, and expressed a similar opinion. He was a queer bluff man, whom for the first time I met at a dinner party given by Henry Irving, long ago, at the Garrick, whereat were present, Stanley (the explorer, of whom I have made mention in the previous chapter), George Sala,



A PORTRAIT OF SIR HENRY IRVING, DRAWN BY PHIL MAY IN THE COURSE OF
AN INTERESTING EVENING AT MY HOUSE AT RAMSGATE. PHIL WAS IN A
CORNER, SILENT, OBSERVANT AND INDUSTRIOUS. NEXT MORNING
HE GAVE ME THIS SKETCH

Johnny Toole, Edmund Yates, William Howard Russell, and others. Now all these whom I have mentioned were excellent *raconteurs*. Irving effaced himself, and was determined that Stanley should give us his marvellous African experiences. However, as, at that time, Stanley was slow of speech and, always diffident, was unwilling to thrust himself before the company, no chance was offered him during dinner, as the conversation was general, the chief parts in it being admirably taken by Russell, Sala, Toole, Irving, and Burton. It was a memorable evening. Coffee and cigars having arrived, our host took advantage of the lull, and reclining in his chair with a large cigar he turned towards Stanley on his right, and thus addressed him—

“ My dear fellow, you must tell us about—your—adventures—your wanderings—in—um—Africa.”

And before Stanley could say “ Certainly ” or make any apology or preface, Irving had rapped the table with his knife, and, with pince-nez settled firmly on nose, he first regarded his opposite neighbour earnestly, then included everyone in a sweeping glance as he said—

“ Now—gentlemen—I want you to listen—to—a—Mr. Stanley. His experiences are most interesting,” then he repeated emphatically as, slipping a little lower down in his chair, he glanced up at Stanley, “ *most* interesting.”

These last words were a sort of “ cue for Stanley,”

who was to understand from the emphatic repetition that if he had not got his "most interesting" experiences ready to hand he was to "make 'em so."

So we all settled down to listen to Stanley. Only thrice have I listened to Stanley—long ago. His matter was always (especially at that time when he was in such demand), as Irving had described it, "most interesting," but he had not then acquired the art of telling his own excellent stories. His narrative at that time needed careful editing, and he himself, however impressive his delivery in a big assembly, could not for a small and select audience give dramatic point to such scenes and incidents as were essentially dramatic. His humour, too, was of the driest, but his eye was ever on the alert to see if his points were taken.

Now it must be remembered that his narrative *vivā voce* was given in the presence of a light-hearted company, who preferred the repartee, the "good story," the imported jest, to any amount of adventures among strange people and curious creatures, particularly when doled out to them in a measured tone, and in sentences so deliberately uttered that those who tried to "hang on his lips" gave up the attempt and fell back in their chairs. "The ancient mariner" with his story was "not in it" with Stanley on this occasion. Somehow his manner and his strange tales fascinated me, and, like the Athenians of old, I "determined to hear more of this matter." The others

gradually succumbed ; one furtively looked at his watch and was suddenly missing ; another apologised for interrupting to ask for a soda and whisky. This demand, which in no way interfered with the steady flow of Stanley's narration, caused a slight movement among the audience, one rising to ring the bell ; and the summons being instantly answered by the waiter, several guests indicated in whispers their desire for drinks and cigars, which having been brought, and the company having once again settled down to resume their listening to a story that had gone on steadily the whole time without interruption, certain of the guests were noticeable by their absence. About a fourth of the party had taken the opportunity of retiring ; nor did they return. Irving, as host, behaved admirably. Partially disappearing under the table, he was stretched out at full length, his head supported by the top rail of the chair-back, in which position he appeared to be listening as carefully as does a judge, with his eyes shut, to a lengthy speech of counsel. Occasionally he would nod ; and lest a false construction should be placed on this Homeric action, he would open his eyes, murmur approval, give a glance, somewhat sardonically, round the table, and then relapse into his attitude of "attention." At some time or other that narrative concerning "the Dark Continent" was finished, and with Irving and one or two others—who they were I forget—I was left to congratulate

the explorer, and not only that, but to walk a part of the way home with him, when I took the opportunity of expressing a hope that we soon might meet again, which we did, at the house of the well-known *Times* correspondent, Colonel Hozier, when Stanley, in his very best manner, told me all that was interesting in the private and public life of some Central African chief or other, and I was treated to the pick of his many curious unpublished adventures in the strangest parts and among the queerest people. This was a most amusing evening, but that one when, at Irving's, the *raconteurs* Sala, Billy Russell, Burton, and Edmund Yates couldn't get a word in edgeways, and had to sit and listen in silence, was unique.

My friendship with Hubert Herkomer, R.A., is one of long standing and of very short sitting, as he painted my portrait in about four days, a very "rapid act" of workmanship. The days were odd ones; I doubt if, in those few days,—and that was all Herkomer required to start one portrait, reject it, start another and finish it,—I gave him two consecutive sittings. The picture is so perfect that had it occupied him during nine sittings it might well have been described as "a nine days' wonder." It was exhibited at the Grosvenor Gallery in Regent Street, not having been in time for the Academy show. It is certainly a *tour de force* even in the history of the many remarkable works of this artist.

Within quite recent years I have not seen his house at Bushey, but when he painted the above-mentioned portrait he was living in one of a couple of ordinary country cottages, which he was gradually changing into palaces of art. Already, at that time, some fifteen years ago, he had built art schools at Bushey, in "Lulu Land," as the district has come to be named (by Herkomer, I suppose), where he lectured to his students, who took lodgings in the neighbourhood and benefited by his instruction and example without the payment of any fees *qua* fees, but only expending money on "properties" essential to their work. Any pupil making good progress and able to rent a studio could take one in the Herkomer schools at such a moderate rent as only represented its proportion of the percentage on the capital employed in the building. I believe this art school has been of the greatest service to pupils. Professor Herkomer (he was not at that time so dignified, by the way; his professorship came later), by this arrangement, could follow out his own plans and teach in his own way; if any pupil gave trouble, he or she was at once dismissed, and by no apology could anyone be reinstated. A teacher who deals only with volunteers and takes no payment is clearly master of the situation; and if, as in our professor's case, he is also a real Master of his Art, he is simply absolute, and deservedly so. Pupils need not seek him unless they like; nor are they bound to remain. All that

is required of them, while studying, is, that they listen and obey, strictly limiting their inquiries to such difficulties, or to such points of interest, as may arise out of each lecture.

Herkomer, ever original, was much exercised in mind by the mechanism employed in stagecraft. In his prophetic eye he saw splendid possibilities to which Augustus Harris, one of the 'cutest of stage-craftsmen, Telbin, Hawes, Craven, and other scenic artists and the best professional stage-machinists appeared, to the professor, absolutely blind. To me, so much engaged at that time on pieces requiring brilliant and startling scenic effects, he came and unfolded his scheme. For burlesque and extravaganza Herkomer had no liking, and I was tiring of them. His proposal was for the production of a thorough novelty, which, as far as I can remember, had had a prototype in Boucicault's *Babil and Bijou* (at Covent Garden, I think, it was produced, or at Her Majesty's, many years before), though this was not, in its essence, the style of entertainment that Herkomer wished to popularise. There was to be a good, strong, but simple plot: it might be in so many tableaux and so many acts,—this would be a matter of arrangement; he had new inventions for stage lighting which should entirely supersede the "footlights"; and he proposed mechanism for his changes of scenery that should produce twice the effect, at that time obtained, at half the cost

both in first outlay and in subsequent nightly working. Many other improvements he suggested which were certainly new and original at that period, and which, as in the case of the footlights or "flote," have been pretty generally adopted. Personally, I was delighted at having such a chance offered me, although at the moment I did not see how I was to set aside all my engagements and give myself up entirely to this work.

"No," explained Herkomer, "I do not, of course, mean that you should do so. I only want to make a bargain with you. I will paint your portrait for you, and you shall write me a piece."

To this most handsome offer I could only object that it would be some time before I could set to work on the play, and that there were other difficulties. But, waiving all obstacles, he merely set my work on a piece, whatever the result, against his work on the picture. He hoped to build a theatre on his own property at Bushey, where he could show, at all events, the commencements of his various plans for revolutionising stage mechanism, and for introducing here a class of entertainment which had hitherto not been seen on the boards of any theatre. Willingly did I join hands over this ; it was a bargain.

"Now," suggested Herkomer, "as you can't set to work at once, and I know you can't, *I* can. I have a few days free, and if you will settle to run down on certain days within the next fortnight to Bushey, I'll

execute my part of the bargain and wait for yours at your own time."

So it was fixed up. The sittings gave me a delightful opportunity of making the acquaintance of Herkomer's father and uncle, both accomplished artists in wood and iron work, a most charming and interesting pair of brothers, hale and hearty at eighty and over eighty, and both strict vegetarians.

The variety of artistic work that the professor was engaged upon staggered me. Metal-moulding, enamelling, wood-carving, mezzo-tinting, architectural designs, musical composition, playing the zither (see his engraving of his own capital picture of "A Zither Evening with my Students"), and performing on the piano not only works of masters that he knew by heart but also his own compositions, which, if I rightly remember, were generally impromptu, at least from no written score, and always perfect in harmony, or, if occasionally they were not so, he detected his own error and corrected it on the spot. *Magister Artium* indeed! Besides the innumerable orders for portraits he has received and executed, besides those he is still continuing to receive, both from at home and abroad, he can decorate himself all over with another kind of "orders," Bavarian, Prussian, and French,—the Prussian *pour le mérite* is the most coveted of all, but brings no title with it; but the Bavarian order inserts the "von" before the surname and is equal to an English patent of nobility,—while he represents

several professorships, no end of gold and silver medalists, is a distinguished honorary member of art societies at home in England, Scotland, Wales, and Australia, while in France he is a foreign associate, in Berlin an academician, a learned professor in Munich, and equal to five honorary members of art academies in Antwerp, Brussels, Holland, Sweden, and the "*Vereinigung der Bildenden Künstler Österreichs* at Vienna!" And even now I have touched only on the fringe of his list of honours. Should Professor Hubert von Herkomer choose to appear with all his blushing decorations thick upon him, what with ribbons and medals, there wouldn't be much left of the professor that would be visible to the naked eye.

He did give a remarkable performance at Bushey. The theatre, his own, was crowded each day by distinguished men and women of all arts, sciences, and professions. The piece played was not the one I had undertaken to write for him: I had drawn up a *scenario* and had written the greater part of an act, but somehow it refused to come out ship-shape, and the professor became his own dramatist, as he was his own scene-painter, composer, machinist, chorus-master, stage-manager, and everything else conceivable. The performance was excellent; and, by the way, I forgot to add that the professor, on this occasion, appeared as an excellent serious pantomimist, and distinguished himself as no mean actor and tuneful singer.

I remember Gus Harris being present and watching it closely. He congratulated everybody. We returned to town together.

"Did you have a talk with Herkomer about the stage effects of moonlight?" I asked Druriolanus, hoping to hear that he was going to adopt Herkomer's improvements and inventions.

"Very good, aren't they?" observed Druriolanus evasively.

"Very," I returned. *You* could do a lot with them," I added flatteringly.

Druriolanus, lolling on his seat (we were in the train), winked at me; that was all. Druriolanus could put an immense amount of meaning into a wink. If he emphasised this with his elbow, giving a nudge in the ribs, and finished with a broad smile, not a grin, and another wink (same eye), you required no further expression of opinion from Druriolanus, and, if you did, you wouldn't have got it.

After this, he talked about the art school, praised Herkomer as "a wonderfully clever chap," and told me he had invited the professor to come at pantomime-time and *see how things were managed at Drury Lane*.

And this was the effect of the artistic lesson on Augustus Druriolanus. Of course, his next Christmas production at Drury Lane excelled all his previous efforts, but whether there was a remarkably effective moonlight scene in it or not escapes this deponent's memory.

CHAPTER XXXV

MEADOWBANK — OBSERVATORY — DU CHAILLU
— DEMONSTRATING — IDLE MOMENT — BEN'S
PARTY — EEL PIE ISLANDERS — COMPETITION
— TRIO — RE-EMBARKING — THE TREACHEROUS
PLANK — SLIPS — HAIRBREADTH ESCAPE — END
OF A DAY'S OUTING AND INNING

I HAVE already mentioned the Observatory in the grounds of Meadowbank, on the Twickenham side of the Thames at Richmond, belonging to Mr. and Mrs. George Bishop, who kept "open house" there throughout the greater part of the year, certainly from earliest spring to latest autumn, and the Observatory was open all the year round to Professor Hind, the Astronomer Royal, and his representatives. Meadowbank and Observatory have long ago disappeared, and the builders have had their run upon the "bank" and left very little of the "meadow" visible. It was a lovely spot, the sole drawback to absolute privacy being the existence of a right of way between the Meadowbank fields and the river; but as there was a deep *fosse* which could only be crossed by a narrow iron bridge with carefully locked gates, whereof only the inmates of Meadowbank possessed

keys, privacy was absolutely secured, and the astronomer, the historian, or any one engaged on studies requiring the maximum of quiet could pursue them undisturbed in the Observatory, the walls of which were of a thickness necessary for the support of the heavy revolving roof. The building contained several rooms, scientific library and instruments, and every requisite for working, and for passing the night there in watching the stars. On special occasions when some bright particular star was expected to do something or other out of its usual line of business, two astronomical detectives would come down to the Observatory and take turn and turn about during the watches of the night, one in bed, the other at work, and *vice versa*. Sometimes the rooms would not be occupied, except during a few sudden and quite unexpected visits. The astronomical assistants came for a whole month, and it so happened that this was the case during the stay of M. Paul du Chaillu at Meadowbank.

Du Chaillu was a most amusing man, very excitable : he was writing his book in one room, while I was doing my work for *Punch* in the next, both of us being guests at Meadowbank : that is, I, who was living just across the river, had been made free of the Observatory to come in and write there as long as I liked and whenever I wanted, and Paul du Chaillu was staying in the house. During intervals of work I would look in upon him or he on me, and then came

pipe and chat. He would tell me what point he had reached in his book, and I could easily lead him on to graphic action by expressing a few doubts, and putting questions to him on various points. Often an excellent Commodore, whose name escapes me at this moment, a great friend of our host's, used to join us, and as "he knew his geography," he could put in some queries which might have been posers for any explorer save Du Chaillu, who would proceed to demonstrate the situation by the aid of tables, chairs, sticks, and anything that came handy. He would act the stalking of animals, the getting within measurable distance of the gorilla, would show us the almost insuperable difficulties of trapping one of these monster monkeys. He was very amusing, and his stories most interesting. He was a devoted admirer of the fair sex, and the fairer her fairness the greater was his devotion.

One lovely summer morning, having relaxed work and crossed the little iron bridge that led on to the Thames bank, we were standing together deliberating lazily on what form our relaxation should take, when we spied a pleasure steamer *en route* probably for Eel Pie Island, which was about a mile or so beyond us. It may be less, but when there's a stiff current against you and you're in a canoe it seems quite that distance. Through my glasses I recognised some faces I knew well aboard the *Mary Jane*, or whatever was its name, and among them I descried Mr. and

Mrs. Billington, Mrs. Alfred Mellon (always known as Miss Woolgar), pretty Miss Furtado, and the lessee and manager of the Adelphi, Benjamin Webster, himself got up in a nautical costume for the occasion, and looking, at a distance, several years younger than he was at that time, when he was well on to seventy, I believe, if he was a day, and, mind you, "*toujours gai*" at that.

When Paul du Chaillu learnt who the water-party were aboard the *Mary Jane*, nothing would satisfy him but my taking him on board and introducing him. Now, as Du Chaillu was "somebody" to introduce, and as I personally was on the best of terms with the entire party, including Miss Furtado, who had at one time been my Ixion among many Ixions in that long running burlesque in town and country, and was now, that is during this summer season, at the Adelphi, playing "the beautiful Helen" in one of my versions of *La Belle Hélène* (its second title being "*taken from the Greek*"), I immediately consented, and so embarking in my own single-paddling canoe and my friend in another, we followed the boat full of merrymakers, to the Island of Eel Pie, whither it preceded our landing by about half an hour.

Ben Webster was of course most courteous in greeting the distinguished foreigner, and we accepted his invitation to partake of the lunch provided for the party. Within a few moments Du Chaillu had become generally popular, had made friends all

round, and had fascinated the attention of La Belle Furtado, a circumstance that, as I perceived, caused considerable amusement to all the other members of the picnic party, with the solitary exception of "The Founder of the Feast," as it was in honour of the pretty and charming young actress and singer that, as I was confidentially informed by one of the members of the company, this picnic had been inaugurated, whereat gallant Ben Webster was to act *in loco parentis* to her, to see that she came to no harm, and to be in fact her very humble servant, to which prerogatives, as her manager, he, in the good old - fashioned managerial way, considered himself legitimately entitled.

"Now Ben he was a nice young man," as the old ballad has it, but La Belle Furtado might have replied with the Fat Boy in Pickwick, "I knows a nicerer"; and on Eel Pie Island at this moment his name was Paul du Chaillu, in whose conversation she evinced the deepest interest, and sitting next to her on the other side, whenever Du Chaillu stopped, being interrupted by Ben Webster, it was my turn to take up the running and converse with our charming companion on theatrical topics and other matters within the personal experience of our two selves. It was soon pretty clear, to any unprejudiced observer gifted with some sense of humour, that the generous donor of this entertainment was not enjoying himself as he had intended to do, nor was it a matter of wonder to

me that he should consult his watch and send for the steward of the *Mary Jane* to ask how the tide was, and if it were favourable to the gallant barque pursuing its course in the direction of Marlow and so on, because "if so," said Ben, "we will have our tea aboard and then return in time for the train that will land us at Waterloo by half-past six." Perhaps "tea aboard" was an inducement to the steward to put no obstacle in the way of re-embarking, as he immediately informed Ben that it was now high tide running and the *Mary Jane* could go on for some distance, and in fact do exactly the turn that Ben Webster required.

"Sorry to break up a pleasant party," said Ben, in his peculiar quavery voice, dismissing with his most gracious smile Du Chaillu's and myself, "but we haven't much time before us; so now, ladies and gentlemen," he said to the party, raising his voice, "all aboard!"

And "all aboard" they went, like sheep following at each other's heels, across a narrow plank with a very rickety rail, and walking very gingerly, bidding one another be most careful as they pointed to the space of river between the island and the boat, which had somehow contrived to swerve round out of its moorings, perhaps in order to admit of smaller craft coming close in to shore.

Of course, Paul du Chaillu, with all the gallantry of a Frenchman (I am not sure whether he was

French or “brave Belge,” but this is unimportant), insisted on helping the ladies across, holding their hands or crossing with them, that is, walking behind each one who showed any nervousness, and steadyng her. La Belle Furtado was the last of the ladies to cross, and once on deck she, as it were, thanked her preserver most gratefully, kissing her hands to Paul and myself, who, on shore, returned her salute with pantomimic fervour.

“Haul in the gangway,” cried our skipper to a waiter, one of the eel-pie-islanders; and hauled in it would have been, and the word of command “go ahead” would have been uttered, as the *Mary Jane* began to swing round, thus increasing her distance from shore, but for a high-pitched voice proceeding from the door of the hotel in the garden—

“Here! Hi! Stop! Hold on!”

“Stop!” shouted the company on board. “It’s the governor!”

It *was* the governor, Ben Webster himself, who had been to settle accounts with the innkeeper, and whom everyone had suddenly forgotten.

“Hurry up, sir,” said the captain.

“Hurry up be d——d,” returned Webster, who was evidently in a very bad temper at this want of proper respect, nay, this evidence of gross neglect and sheer ingratitude on the part of his own company to whom he was playing the Mecænas on the river.

"It's all right, guv'nor!" cried Johnnie Toole, who, safe aboard, was *sotto voce* sending his companions into fits of laughter almost uncontrollable, at the expense, it is sad to say, of his worthy employer and manager.

"Where's the infernal gangway," asked Webster querulously. "Oh, here"—as his attention was drawn to it—"now keep the blank thing steady."

Du Chaillu and myself held the very skimpy railing of the plank so as to allow Ben Webster to start, but "of all men else he would have avoided us," as it appeared, and being very irritable at the moment, he waved us aside, saying petulantly—

"All right! all right! I'm not a child—I can walk alone"—and with this, he stepped on to the plank, Miss Furtado, on deck, holding out her hand towards him to facilitate his landing. But, unfortunately, a small steamer in passing, created a wash; the *Mary Jane* swung; Ben made a false step; crack went the plank, and down went the unlucky manager, in between the steamer and the bank, plop into the water!

There was an awful shriek from everyone on board. Du Chaillu ran down the wooden steps with a boat-hook,—the *Mary Jane* would have inevitably heeled over if the captain had not shouted to the people to "trim the boat,"—but the excitement lasted for scarcely a second, as the river at this point being very shallow, Ben touched ground, or

rather mud, at once, and was able to stand up and show his head above water.

And "show his head" he did, literally; for though before he went under his locks had been dark and glossy, now his scalp was as smooth as a billiard ball.

Not to laugh, that was the difficulty. Johnnie Toole cried over it—that is, after "the guv'nor" had been hauled ashore, and had retired within the Eel Pie House, there to be rigged out in any dry suit the landlord could spare for the occasion.

Of course he was not seen again that day by the entire party, as the majority were taken by the *Mary Jane* to Richmond, and thence they went on to town; but Webster the Wigless, attired in the landlord's Sunday suit, was attended to by Johnnie Toole and Billington, both of whom remained ashore with the luckless manager, and with the landlord's hat on his head, a size too small for him, so that he looked like the pictures of Mr. Micawber in the illustrated edition of *Copperfield*, he received the condolences of Paul du Chaillu and myself, smilingly, though I'm sure he set down this unrehearsed effect entirely to our unexpected appearance on the scene. After seeing him seated with his friends, who had supplied him with some hot brandy and water and a cigar, we bade him good-bye, thanked him for a very pleasant day, and went off merrily in our canoes and back to the Observatory at Meadowbank.

CHAPTER XXXVI

GALLERY OF ILLUSTRATION — THE REEDS — NOVELTY — INIMITABLE JOHN PARRY — THE THREE ENTERTAINERS — REFINEMENT — SCENE-PAINTERS — PARRY — AS A DANCER — CHORISTER — *OUR YACHT* — STAGE ARRANGEMENTS — CHANGES — ACTION — DIALOGUE — AUTHORS — GERMAN REED — THE SPORTSMAN — THE SAILOR — ECONOMY ABOARD — AN INVITATION — ACCEPTED — EMBARKING — SHORT CRUISE — HAPPY RETURN

SEMI-THEATRICAL entertainments and dramatic entertainers disappeared from the list of London and provincial amusements when the German Reed's show came to an end. "The Gallery of Illustration" was at one time "an institution." Thither that considerable section of the public which loves theatricals and yet will not, on principle, set foot within a theatre, found the *via media* provided for them by Mr. and Mrs. German Reed's entertainment.

It was a vastly clever idea. German Reed, a thoroughly capable musician, a fair composer and excellent pianist, for some time conductor of

orchestras in many of our principal theatres, well up in all "stage-business," and not only that but a good business man as well (which is of the greatest importance), married Miss Priscilla Horton, who had sung, and sung charmingly, in opera, and in Shakespearian pieces, her *Ariel*, as I had been frequently informed by my music-loving uncles, for her best day was in their time, being indelible in their memories of delightful evenings ; and this couple, breaking with the theatre, started the sort of "entertainment" which would find enthusiastic and paying patrons among that non-theatre-going portion of the public which was becoming tired of scientific lectures, dissolving views, panoramas, and conjurers.

The constant work would have been too much for this clever couple, and there was a chance of the entertainment becoming a trifle monotonous, when by great good luck Mr. John Parry, absolutely inimitable as a singer of genuinely comic songs and simply unapproachable in his own line, then or after, as a master of musical humour and illustrator of it on the piano, had found his single-handed, if I may so describe a pianist's performance, entertainment rather too much for his nervous system, as more than once in his career had he been threatened with complete breakdown of his quite exceptional powers. "Boy and man" I have literally writhed with laughter at his fun ; indeed, as a boy, hearing John Parry for the first time in my life at the Hanover Square Rooms

when he pretended to give an evening party all by himself, whereat he was host, hostess, friends to guests, young ladies, young gentlemen, the waiters, and even the supper, my “risible faculties” were put to so severe a strain that I must have “died o’ laughter” had I not been judiciously removed by my father, and taken out to air in the invigorating atmosphere of a draughty passage. John Parry was wonderful! and of course an “immense attraction” to all classes of the community who love a laugh, so long as they have not to go inside a theatre for it and see “a profane stage play.”

So John Parry became the ally and partner of Mr. and Mrs. German Reed, and it is safe to aver that such a trio, if ever seen before, has never been seen since. Their entertainment, which at first was essentially of the simple “drawing-room” order, necessitating only a piano and the assumption of character, gradually developed into a representation of what I may term “pocket-musical-comedies.” These comedies were sometimes in “parts,”—for to the last the “Gallery of Illustration” retained its hold on total abstainers from theatres by never using ordinary dramatic terms for the divisions of their entertainment, or else the “parts” could have been quite correctly described as “acts,”—and more often were in “one scene only.” The scenes were gems of the painter’s art, and were always the work of the best scenic artists of the day, such for instance as Telbin,

Grieve, Beverley, and O’Connor. Certainly what with the elegance of the front of the house, mainly comfortable stalls and pit (there were no boxes or any side seats) all at such an angle that a perfect view of the stage could be obtained from any part of the auditorium, the excellent lighting, the little orchestra consisting of piano and harmonium dis- coursing most melodious music, the noiseless and unobtrusive attendance—for there was, at first and for a long time afterwards, always the sort of idea kept up that you were attending a meeting and nothing in any way resembling a theatre, and that the attendants were somehow not very distantly related to pew-openers, or might even have been pew-openers themselves only slightly disguised,—the German Reed’s entertainment was unique, and soon became quite the most popular amusement in London. They played at first, as a rule, in the afternoon ; subsequently the afternoon performances were confined to Wednesdays and Saturdays (and on these evenings there was no performance), and they performed four nights a week. This arrangement gave them two evenings “off,” which they used to turn to account by enjoying themselves at the theatre, or, in the season, at the opera, unless prevented by private engagements, for they were much sought after, Mrs. German Reed being delightful company and “Pa Reed,” as later in life he was affectionately termed, having a fund of amusing experiences on which to

draw. As for John Parry—well, lucky the host who had him for a guest at any party, for John, among friends, was immense whatever he did. At table his stories were excellent and his dry humour unsurpassable. In early days when I was writing entertainments for the Reeds I frequently met him at houses where he found the atmosphere thoroughly congenial,—at Boucicault's, at the Chappell's, at Frith's, and elsewhere. Then what fun he was at Christmas parties, when he came out strong in a quadrille or a country dance! On such occasions he was always in the best of spirits; but alas! he suffered from the reaction next day; and, later in life, from melancholia. On some Sundays John Parry would don a surplice and assist in the choir of his church; but this had occasionally somewhat disturbed the devotion of the congregation and interfered with the chaunting of the psalms. No doubt in time the "assistance" gradually became accustomed to John Parry's fervour, but not a few non-parishioners paid the church a visit on Sunday mornings on purpose to see John Parry "as a chorister."

I wrote a piece for them entitled, if I recollect aright, *Our Yacht*. Now, at this time, in the Reed and Parry entertainment, the presence of a piano on the stage was essential, as there was no orchestra, nor had even the harmonium been introduced. Whatever piece was written for them, allowance had to be made for the piano on the stage, and this was

so until Arthur Blunt, Fanny Holland, Dick Grain, and Taff Reed were added to the company, when piano and harmonium were relegated to their proper place in the orchestra, which was sunk in front of the stage; and these instruments were played by German Reed and an accompanist, the former having retired from active participation in the stage business. This arrangement was adopted when Parry was no longer with them, and when, of the original trio, only Mrs. German Reed remained, still taking her place at the head of the *corps dramatique*.

In *Our Yacht*, written for the Reeds and Parry before the changes above mentioned had been made I hit upon a plot which provided six or eight transformations for the clever trio. These "illustrations," as they were termed on the programme, were "characters" frequently "made up" in less than five minutes, but, as a rule, the piece was so constructed by their authors, Shirley Brooks, W. S. Gilbert, Charles Stephenson, and myself, as to allow the impersonator time to change from one character to another, or to resume an assumption while the two others were diverting the audience and carrying on the plot. If two were changing "off," one was "on" with a song, and with plenty of "stage business." It was all action with dialogue: every piece was admirably rehearsed, and there never was a dull moment in any production that I can remember.

at "The Gallery." The prices were very reasonable, and not up to those of the theatre. From beginning to end I never heard of their having had a failure, and their show was most popular wherever they went all over the country, especially in those places where the parsonic and puritanic influence predominated.

Away from his professional work Tom German Reed was a sportsman first and a sailor afterwards. He used to hunt with the Old Berkeley, I think; at all events in the winter he would make as many hunting days of his Tuesdays and Thursdays as possible, getting away for the latter after his afternoon show on Wednesday, spending the night out of town, having a good day with hounds, up to, say, three o'clock, and then back to London in time for what he called "warm food" at the Garrick Club, and on to the Gallery about seven.

In the summer he would get away for a cruise, starting on Saturday night from the Thames, having sent on the yacht to some near point on the Kentish coast.

And that yacht!! It was about thirty tons, cutter rigged, an old-fashioned sort of a fishing boat, which, not having been well "found," was in the roughest tumble-down condition I ever remember to have seen any yacht, except one, and that was (as mentioned in these reminiscences) the gallant vessel chartered by Julius Rowley, Lord

Richard Grosvenor, and myself, when "we took a boat and went to sea" from Liverpool, making for the Isle of Man, which we never reached.

"Expensive thing a yacht?" I asked German Reed when we were lunching together at the Garrick.

"Depends how you go about it," he returned sagely. "You don't want a cruise for show among the nobs at Cowes, eh?"

"Certainly not," I replied; "I just want a good boat and comfort. I want it waiting for me"—

"Like a horse," interrupted Pa Reed; "that's my idea." He got his horses always wonderful bargains, invariably not much to look at, but "goers" and "stayers" too! I doubt if Pa Reed ever rose above "a pony" for a horse. But to resume. "I keep my yacht," he explained—"when I say 'mine,' I have a share of it—*The Alice*—with two other chaps;"—here he mentioned their names, but as I am not quite certain of their identity, I won't venture upon them,—“they don't appear very often, at least not together. One partner very rarely comes to town, but he always gives a good three days' notice, and the other chooses certain days, and sometimes he sails with me and sometimes goes by himself. We each find our own grub, and it doesn't come to much just for the four months we keep her 'in commission.'"

"But the crew, eh?" I asked.

"Ah, well," answered Pa Reed, with a knowing wink, "we get chaps that aren't every one's money, real good old hands, thoroughgoing salts, you know, no jemmy-jessamy kind of fancy sailors."

"I ask," I said, "because I really do want to do something quiet in this line myself—it is such a real change"—

"It is indeed," chimed in Pa Reed.

"But I have to consider expense," I said firmly, as one who was not going to be led into becoming a spendthrift for the sake of indulging in the pleasures of yachting.

"My dear fellow," said Pa Reed, "we're both working men. I'm an old 'un, you're a beginner. I've had to save and make, and I've got as much fun and sport out of a small sum per annum, yachting and hunting, as others would have done out of five times the amount."

"How do you manage?" I inquired eagerly; "'speed me to know it!'"

"Very simple," quoth Pa Reed, being confidential over his after-early-dinner whisky and water (generally hot). "Crew not expensive. I know how to work the boat myself. Quite up in the business long ago. Well—I could count for *one* man any way. A thirty-tonner should have three men all told. Consider me as half a one. Good. You want the other half, naturally. *Hire a boy.* Two halves

make a whole. Half of me and the entire boy equal one sailor."

"I see." It struck me as ingenious. "And how much," I inquired, "do you give the boy?"

"That," he replied, "depends. If parents wish boy to learn his business, then I get him for his bread and cheese and so forth. Or he may be the son of one of the hands that I'm going to engage, and the father comes cheap on condition of the little sonny being, as it were, thrown into the bargain, as he can't leave him to get into mischief ashore."

"Excellent!" I exclaimed. "And what does the parent sailor cost you per week?" I asked.

"Well," said Pa, slowly steaming himself with hot grog and a cigar, "the lad's father is generally a cripple."

"What?" I exclaimed, astonished.

"I mean by a cripple," explained Pa Reed with a twinkle in his eye, "that he has only one arm, or one leg, as the case may be,—my present one has only one leg,—and so the lad acts as his other arm, or leg; and as a chap like that, though he's a thoroughgoing seaman, is not the fellow they want on board a smart yacht, nor indeed as a handy man (let alone a legly man) in any crew, he'd be earning a very precarious livelihood ashore." This was evident. Pa Reed continued, "So you see he's glad enough to come to me for about fifteen bob a week, boy included."

"And your third man?"

"Our third man—um—" Reed considered a bit, then continued, "well—I only get him, on and off, for the job; because, you see, if my second partner is aboard, he and I can do all that's wanted—in fact, in that case, we're rather over-manned—and if my third partner chose to join us two, *we shouldn't want any one at all*, except the boy, perhaps, who might be useful; but, as a rule, the third man is 'an odd job man'; respectable, quite reliable, and generally disengaged (I forget what his irregular occupation is—something in portage and lading, I think)—at least for this sort of work, as *he* is a bit o' damaged goods too, being a trifle deaf of one ear."

"Very awkward," I submitted.

"Not a bit," replied Pa Reed slyly; "I know which ear it is, and I always get the right side of him."

"The deaf sailor doesn't cost much then, eh?" I suggested.

"Thorough seaman, he is teetotaller, most capable and willing," pursued German Reed, totting up the deaf sailor's accomplishments, "and only too glad to come for a few shillings and an old coat or any old boots I may have by me. So you see, with three partners to share 'exs.' it doesn't work out at much over ten shillings a week apiece,—grub not included. But that's much the same everywhere.

Of course you have to rough it a bit; but you'll get more fun out of it than most men will out of what would cost 'em just treble the money."

It was delightful to hear him chuckle over these economical devices. I did accept his invitation. I did try his yacht. I had to walk, carrying my portmanteau, to the end of the pier at Herne Bay, it being low tide, and the yacht unable to get within a hundred yards of the pier. Herne Bay pier is three-quarters of a mile in length. How delighted I was! Such a drizzly dark night. What an amiable temper I was in when at last I stepped out of a cockleshell of a dingy, rowed by the deaf man, who couldn't and wouldn't give me any information, on to the deck of the *Saucy Alice*, or whatever her blessed name was, and there found German Reed, the boy, and the one-legged sailor.

Oh, such a night! Was there anything to eat on board? Yes, the remains of a pie, some bread and butter, and, for drink, a bottle of brandy, also one of whisky.

Where was I to sleep? Cabin? Not a bit of it. A bunk. Any fittings? Any sort of real comfort, such as I had anticipated? Not a sign of it.

"I said you'd have to rough it a bit," quoth Pa Reed, wagging his head.

I admitted that he had spoken the literal truth; indeed he would not have overshot the mark had he omitted the qualification of "a bit," and had said

simply and boldly, “We shall have to rough it, considerably.”

The next morning, as luck would have it, wind and tide took us to Gravesend, and on plea of important engagement in town on Sunday, I literally bolted, and was up to town and home as quick as the deliberately travelling Sunday train (in those days) could take me.

I have never again accepted any invitation, no matter how hearty and pressing, which has been qualified by the admission that “roughing it a bit” was included in the offer.

CHAPTER XXXVII

ENCORE A.D.C.—AN EXTRACT—CHARACTERS—
HIS MAJESTY WHEN PRINCE OF WALES—
DISTINGUISHED VISITORS—HIS MAJESTY—
LORD CARINGTON—SIR CHARLES HALL—
MR. ALFRED—LORD ROTHSCHILD—PUBLIC
RECOGNITION—BANQUET—SUCCESS—GRENVILLE
MURRAY—EDMUND YATES—HENRY
LABOUCHERE—*WORLD—TRUTH*—THE PACHA
—LOUIS ENGEL—SOME QUEER JOURNALISM
—A SCENE AT THE OPERA—NO RESULTS

I WILL return to the A.D.C. in these pages, as I have occasionally returned to the A.D.C. since my quitting Cambridge after the Lent term of 1858. It is very refreshing now, forty-five years after my leave-taking, to be able to record that through all these generations of undergraduates the Club has never forgotten its founder, but has from time to time, by its temporary President or Secretary, sent me pressing invitations and most kind offers of hospitality for as long as I liked to stay. Referring to my notes in the A.D.C. Reminiscences, I find entries copied from the Club's diaries regretting

my absence when there has been some specially good performance.

Here is an extract after a performance of *Helping Hands* in the May term of 1858:—

“*Thoroughly good. The acclamation and applause of the house, long and loud, showed how it was appreciated. We very much wish F. C. B. had been here to see it.*”

Rowley Hill, subsequently Bishop of Sodor and Man, styled in the bills “Mr. Gorman Bourke,” was then acting, as was also “Jimbo” Leigh, now an Hon. and Rev. dignitary of the Church of England, under the *alias* of “Mr. Jimboli,” and the Hon. Lionel Ashley was appearing as *Helen* in “the Screaming Farce” of *The Two Bonnycastles*. Mr. Robert H. Hobart, now an important personage in the Earl Marshal’s office, was also in the cast, under the pseudonym of “Mr. B. Agpipes.” These old lists and memoranda of the Cambridge Amateur Dramatic Club, the first of its kind in either University, have an interest for very many others besides “old members.” Specially interesting, at this time, is it to note that His Gracious Majesty King Edward the Seventh, now happily reigning, was as Prince of Wales pleased to accept the Honorary Presidency of the Club, and indeed its public recognition, as an “institution” at the University, was owing entirely to His

Royal Highness's active support and generous patronage.

Well do I remember revisiting Cambridge in March 1861, in order to conduct rehearsals for the entertainment to be given at the A.D.C. rooms in presence of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales and a very distinguished "assistance." Among those down on the list of the "invited," I find the Master of Trinity —this was Dr. Whewell—and Lady Affleck, Earl of Hardwicke, Bishop of Leeds, Master of Downing, Professor Sedgwick, and many other notabilities, including the Provost of King's—Dr. Okes, promoted from Eton—and Mrs. Okes. We had an early rehearsal, and on coming away in order to go out to lunch at King's, previous to returning to work, I had to pass by the door of the Athenæum in Trinity Street. "The door of the Athenæum" sounds grand, but the fact is that the Athenæum Club, at the time of which I speak, was established in rooms over a tailor's—I think it was a tailor's—opposite the gate of Trinity; and the entrance to it from the street was so insignificant as to be absolutely "nothing to speak of." A narrow lodging-house staircase led up to the Athenæum, which was the aristocratic club, professedly, of the University, but—really its limitations were Trinitarian.

Opposite this door a pony-chaise had just drawn up, driven by a junior friend of mine, Lord Carrington, or, as he then was, the Hon. Mr. C.

Carington ("Carington" spelt with one "r," the second was inserted on his Lordship becoming Earl of Carrington), popularly known as "Charley Carington," by whose side was seated the most distinguished undergraduate that had honoured the University, and especially Trinity College, Cambridge, with his gracious presence, namely, H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, in the heyday of youth and thorough happiness. With that cheery bonhomie and graceful tact which have ever been, pre-eminently, the King's social characteristics, the Prince whispered to Carington, who at once hailed me, and, in a quite informal manner, presented me to His Royal Highness, who in the most genial manner asked me many questions about the amateur performances past and present, being evidently bent on taking the earliest opportunity of doing the Club a good turn.

Up with Carington at Cambridge was another popular Charley, "Charley Hall," also an intimate friend of the Prince, by whom he was in later years appointed H.R.H.'s Attorney-General for the Duchy of Cornwall. Charley was a lifelong friend of mine, and by few has his loss been felt—he was quite recently among us—more than by myself. And how I call him to mind at Cambridge! What genuine hearty enjoyment it all was! As the old song of "The Sad Sea Waves" has it, "We were young, we were fair" (at least *he* was)—"We had

once not a care"—which I should say was absolutely true, but alas, it was for "*once*" only!

Then up at Cambridge in those delightfully easy-going old days, when I had the one advantage over the undergraduates of that period of having left college and being an absolutely free man up at Cambridge, without the fear of dons or proctors, discounted by the disadvantage of being some years the senior of my young friends, and of having already the cares of an early rising family upon me, there was also another excellent friend, Mr. Alfred de Rothschild, who, with his eldest brother, known always as "Natty," now Lord Rothschild, was from his first appearance as an undergraduate an enthusiastic supporter of the A.D.C.

Mr. Alfred had been elected "Master of the Music" to the Club, and in addition to arranging all the music for the burlesques and for the orchestral intervals, he played (on the occasion I refer to) *Fra Diavolo* in the burlesque of that name, written by Henry J. Byron, in which part his *début* is recorded in the annals of the Club as "perfectly successful," his song, "I am a simple muleteer," it is stated in the same notice, "being encored." "In fact," continues this honest, artless record, "he was a most graceful brigand, and thoroughly realised the character." So, as it appears, the Club possessed several sterling influential

friends who would certainly do their very best to carry out the Prince of Wales's kindly expressed wish that the A.D.C. should be, as it were, "presented with the freedom of the University," so that, after this open recognition and implied approval, its performances, which had hitherto been officially "winked at" (the tickets, by the way, being "on sale or return" in every college hall, while its programmes were given away broadcast), should now be patently acknowledged by "the Heads of the Colleges,"—a term, by the way, always suggestive to me of pantomime monstrosities in pasteboard and plaster.

Not only did His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales graciously undertake to obtain immunity from proctors and from other disabilities under which the Club was suffering, but also he most good-naturedly consented to take the chair at an anniversary banquet given in celebration of the founding of the Club and of its starting afresh freed from all shackles, except debt, its members having now been enabled, by Royal aid, to shake off the yoke under which their predecessors had groaned (what fun the groaning had been, when, "regardless of their doom [if caught], the little victims played" all sorts of farces and burlesques in the queer old rooms !), and, to quote Mr. Micawber, "to look their fellow-[university] men," members of boat clubs, of literary clubs, of debating clubs, and cricket

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clubs, "in the face," and say, "We too are free! We, the sons of Alma Mater equally with yourselves, are free! The ban of the University is no longer on the poor amateur theatrical player, no matter how poor a player he may be!"

That banquet was a great occasion. I remember preparing a history of the A.D.C., mentioning everything and everybody, a sort of "pious memorial of the founders," and thoroughly interesting a very large audience, which, after the usual loyal toasts had been given and responded to, cordially appreciated the effort, and made the speech a real success. Unfortunately, of this speech I have no record. I cannot find a single note about it: only a slight reference to the fact in my book about the A.D.C. However, it certainly was a memorable occasion for many of us.

The mention of Lord Carington reminds me of a disgraceful piece of so-called journalism in a paper called *The Queen's Messenger*, belonging to and edited by one Grenville Murray, which enjoyed a brief but memorable career. Its editor, who was also the writer of a scurrilous article, affecting Lord Carington's father, brought down on his shoulders some cutting remarks from Lord Carington, conveyed to the malicious scribbler's shoulders by Lord Carington's riding-whip. Mr. Grenville Murray, charged with perjury, fled the country, and never returned. I think, but am not

sure, that before this he had been part-proprietor of *The World* when it was first started by Edmund Yates on his return from America with a thousand pounds in his pocket, the result of his readings. I am pretty sure that Murray, after this, found no occupation for his really clever pen in English journalism. He died in Paris some six or seven years ago.

With Yates, at first, was Henry Labouchere, M.P., who, after a while, quitted Edmund's band to start *Truth*, which was never once, as far as I remember, in antagonism to *The World*. In this latter paper, among the notably active spirits, were Broadley, known as "Broadley Pacha," and Louis Engel for the musical criticisms.

Engel was a sharp, clever little German, with strong likes and dislikes, and not particular in restraining his expression of them in either case. His unbiassed opinion was probably worth having, otherwise Edmund Yates was not the man to have engaged him. But he was a trouble; and he was one of that old school of which, thank goodness, one hears very little now, whose good opinion was considered so valuable as to be worth purchasing, by those concerning whom it would be expressed in public, at a price. Not that this meant "value for money" by any means; in such cases, cash cannot openly pass, but there are various cajoleries, flatteries, and many little schemes which, artistically

worked, ought to ensure, mutually, the desired result. The days are past and gone I believe, but I may be in error, when a *prima donna's* first care was to become acquainted with the leading musical critics, or with some one on whose judgment, and perhaps influence, musical critics relied. We do not hear nowadays of some singer about to appear in public and hitherto unknown to the British public sending a handsome present, a ring it might be or any trifle of jewellery, to a critic, begging his acceptance of it as a mark of the sender's esteem and admiration for his services to music; but such things were done at the period of which I write, and, as it seems to me, stupidly done. To meet at dinner or at a *soirée* some one who is about to make his or her *début* and to hear their singing or their recital is neither bribery nor corruption, and a personal introduction does not necessarily constitute so real a friendship between *artiste* and critic as to place the latter in a difficult position when in the exercise of his professional duty. But Louis Engel, in his enthusiasm for any singer in whom he was personally interested, made curious mistakes, and happening to blunder in this respect in the case of Mr. Hermann Klein, a well-known musical critic, who had indignantly refused to barter his freedom of opinion in exchange for certain gifts proffered him by Louis Engel, and had thus incurred the latter's deep displeasure, Engel was determined "to have his knife into" Mr. Hermann Klein, and

tried to get up a case against him in respect to some young lady whose name is not here of any importance. I remember there were anonymous letters ; I remember too that Louis Engel called on me with a batch of correspondence at the *Punch* office and failed to interest me as a partisan. I forget if the case ever came into Court, but I remember that, somehow or other, George Lewis was in it ; he was always being consulted by everybody about everything, and he was at that time, I fancy, the solicitor to *The World* and Edmund Yates. The upshot was that one evening Hermann Klein appeared as usual at the opera, Covent Garden, wearing a very fierce and most determined aspect, and with a set expression about his mouth that boded no good to some one. I did not hear until many days afterwards that he had come there with the express purpose of denouncing Louis Engel who had brought the above-mentioned charge against him, and that this intention he had confided to Henry Hersee and others among his fellow-critics. Now it so happened that, ignorant of the mine that had been laid, I was on the landing at the entrance to the refreshment room at Covent Garden chatting, between the acts, to Tom Hohler (amateur singer, who, after quitting his clerkship in some Government office, went for a while on the operatic stage, subsequently marrying the Duchess of Newcastle) and Louis Engel, when I noticed a number of men, whose

faces I recognised as professionals, musical critics, and others, gathering about us, and at the same moment up the grand staircase came Hermann Klein, who, ignoring Tom Hohler and myself, made straight for Louis Engel and delivered himself of a short but uncommonly strong speech, which took Hohler and myself utterly by surprise, and apparently deprived Engel of any power of reply. There were no blows, there was only a pretty straightly worded threat, and in another second Klein's friends had hustled him away, just as one of the Yates's (I forget which son it was, then acting in "the front of the house" for Gus Harris in his first year of operatic management) followed by a police inspector briskly ascended the stairs. The incident could not have occupied more than a few seconds, but in that short space of time, I suppose, "honour was satisfied," as I never remember to have heard of any action resulting from this scene. All I remember is that as the imperturbable Charlotte after Werner's suicide "went on cutting bread and butter," so Hermann Klein went on earning his bread and butter, or some of it, by continuing at his post as musical critic to more than one journal. But this I have heard on the best authority that when subsequently Louis Engel wanted to write about the whole matter from, of course, his own point of view in *The World*, and was about to seize the earliest possible opportunity,

offered by one of his own articles, for reviving the subject and "getting a few nasty ones in" about Mr. Hermann Klein, Edmund Yates, so injudicious wherever matters personal to himself were on the *tapis*, and so reckless when handling anything of the sort with his own pen in his own strong right hand,—his own wrong hand as it might have been described on such occasions,—but who was absolutely discretion itself when dealing with the impulses of any one of his contributors, on finding that Louis Engel, in an article that came under his editorial eye, had written a paragraph to the effect that "in consequence of having received inquiries from innumerable correspondents concerning Mr. Klein, he, Louis Engel, was able to inform them," and so forth, wrote at the side of the proof, of which he had "cancelled" every line—

"Tell your correspondents that you have not replied to them because your editor will not let you.—E. Y."

Edmund was in this case a good friend, as he could be on occasion, and here proved himself a wary editor. There was no resumption of hostilities on either side.

Klein came to hear of this, and was glad to recognise in Edmund Yates a "*justum atque tenacem virum.*" No doubt as to his being a "*tenax,*" and where his judgment was not warped by personal prejudice, Edmund Yates could be both just and

generous, nay even “kind to a fault.” He was a capital editor, except, as I have said, where his own work was concerned, and privately was a most amusing companion and, when well, hearty, and unworried, a genial host.

CHAPTER XXXVII

CARDINAL MANNING—JOHN BRIGHT—JEFFERSON—SOTHERN AS DUNDREARY—DILLON CROKER—KIKI—MARK LEMON—JIMMY DAVIDSON—*MUSICAL WORLD*—FRED CLAY—ARTHUR SULLIVAN—HIS INITIALS—SHIRLEY BROOKS—E. L. BLANCHARD—H. BYRON—MEREDITH—AT ESHER—BURLESQUE VERSE—ANOTHER GEORGE—RHYME—MARIE WILTON—DION BOUCICAULT—TAYLOR—BEN WEBSTER—MISS FURTADO—TWO *HELENS*—A GEM FROM LADY BANCROFT—DROPPING THE CURTAIN—FINISH

FROM among many docketed parcels of interesting letters I select a few, which are here reproduced in facsimile. The first is from Cardinal Manning, whose introductions were of considerable use to us, my wife and myself, in Rome, though I regret to say that "circumstances over which we had no control" cut short our stay, and so, to our very great regret, we were compelled to leave the Eternal City without having been able to avail ourselves of the great privilege of being received in audience by His Holiness Pope Leo XIII. Mon-

signor Stonor's invitation arrived as we were departing.

"ARCHBISHOP'S HOUSE, WESTMINSTER, S.W.,
"February 19, 1889.

"MY DEAR MR. BURNAND,—I will write straight to Mgr. Stonor in Rome (27 Via Sistine), and will ask him to do all in his power for you.

"I send you two of my cards, one for him, and one for Mgr. della Volpe, the Pope's Maestro di Camera.

"It gives me much pleasure to be of any use to you and Mrs. Burnand.—Believe me always, very truly yours, HENRY E., *Cardinal-Archbishop.*"

The next is from John Bright, whom I had the pleasure of meeting three or four times, not more. On one occasion at a small party given by Sir William Agnew, our host craftily beguiled his distinguished guest into making an after-dinner speech, which, seeing that he was utterly taken by surprise and not so pleased at the opportunity afforded him as we were at the chance of hearing the great orator *en petit comité*, was a thing to be remembered. John Bright was a bit angry at first, but he got over it, and made a most amusing speech of quite a quarter of an hour's duration. I had occasion to write to him upon a small matter in no way connected with this little party, and received the following reply :—

"ROCHDALE, June 23, 1886.

"DEAR MR. BURNAND,—Mr. Miller has often written to me on political questions—he is a great writer of letters—but I think nothing I have written to him can be of such consequence that he should trouble you about it.

"I advise you not to give yourself any anxiety about any letter of mine.—Yours very truly,

"JOHN BRIGHT."

How careless some folks are as to dating letters! I have come upon one written by the celebrated American actor, Jo Jefferson, without any date. It simply says he is off to Scotland and then to America. Jefferson was the original of *The American Cousin*, written to order for him by Tom Taylor. But in this piece there was the part of an absurd English nobleman, which, as it happened, fell to the lot of Sothern, then a comparatively unknown man on the stage in America. Sothern was rather loath to undertake the part, but by Boucicault's advice accepted it, Boucicault lending him such material for costume as he happened to have with him on tour in the States. On the first night the accident of a stutter and a tumble, never contemplated at rehearsal, made the fortune of *Lord Dundreary*. His part grew and grew. Finally it became too big for the principal character, and Jo Jefferson, the hero of the piece, after a consultation with Sothern, decided on dividing

the piece between them. Sothern was to seek his fortune in England with *The American Cousin*, himself as Lord Dundreary being the attraction, while Jo Jefferson would remain in America with the piece as originally written for him. How its author Tom Taylor came out of this I don't know. I hope both, however, paid him, for fees were very small at that period. It must have been rather a difficult matter to decide. Had the single piece been multiplied by two, or had it been merely divided? In the first case the author would have been entitled to double fees; in the second he would have received half fees from Sothern and Jefferson. Or if the original contract were with Jefferson an entirely new one might have been made with Sothern. Sothern's first appearance here as Lord Dundreary was a failure, so much so that Buckstone, the lessee of the Haymarket, contemplated taking the piece off the boards as soon as possible, and on the first night (I had this on the best authority) the actors and actresses of the Haymarket Company avoided meeting the young actor, Edward Sothern, strange to London, as they did not like condoling with him on a failure! How it grew into a success I do not know. Personally, I heard it once, and certainly condemned it. It did not make me laugh, and the celebrated letter that Lord Dundreary reads aloud I had myself come across, long before, in a book called *Irish Diamonds* by the Brothers Smith.

Meeting, soon afterwards, Dillon Croker, he gave me an imitation of *Dundreary*, which made me laugh so much that I awoke to the humour I had missed. Revisiting *Dundreary* I was delighted, and retracted my opinion ; but by that time the critics had found out their mistake, and the public had discovered the peculiar humour of *Lord Dundreary*. The Hay-market Company, no longer afraid to meet the latest addition to their ranks, now welcomed him heartily, and to all intents and purposes Sothern gradually became manager of the Haymarket Theatre *vice* J. B. Buckstone, who, still remaining lessee and manager, left all the cares of the office to Edward Sothern. After this Sothern only achieved minor successes. He never absolutely failed, but whatever he played, he was always remembered as *Dundreary*. When Jo Jefferson came to London he captivated us all with his wonderful *Rip Van Winkle*, and, as in the history of the English and American drama, the name of Sothern will ever be associated with *Dundreary*, so will Jefferson's be with *Rip Van Winkle*.

"Kiki" Du Maurier and myself used frequently to correspond as to French books, advising one another what to take or to avoid. Frequently his letters were illustrated. There is a letter in the Appendix, very characteristic.

The next is also characteristic of Kiki Du Maurier in a hurry ; dashing off a letter, making a





MARK LEMON, FIRST EDITOR AND ONE OF THE FIRST ORIGINATORS
OF *PUNCH*

From a photograph in the possession of Lady Romer

kind inquiry after our friend William Bradbury's health, and adding antescript and postscript.

There is also reproduced a delightful one with dashed off caricature sketches of Sir John Tenniel smoking a long pipe, Charles Keene a short one, and himself, "Little Jack Horner" in the corner, with a cigarette.

I have, I regret to say, only one specimen of dear old Mark Lemon's handwriting. The date is unfinished, but I should reckon it at about 1866.

Ordinarily, "the Whitefriars" office was always open on a Saturday, and there Shirley and "Pater" Evans, with one or two other "gossips" used to foregather with Mark, when "old Caspar's work was done," over "a quiet cigar," and, as Dick Swiveller hath it, "a modest quencher."

The excellent photograph of Mark Lemon, quite *chez lui* in the country, where in his later life he loved to be, I am enabled to reproduce by kind permission of Sir Robert and Lady Romer, who have extracted this, which is probably unique, from their collection. It is the very best likeness of "Mark" I ever remember to have seen. Attitude perfect.

I have had occasion to mention the eccentric "Jimmy Davison," first-rate musical critic of the *Times*. I have just found a letter of his, of a most mystifying character. Jimmy Davison edited *The Musical World*, to which the late Charles Lamb Kenney and Sutherland Edwards, still with us and

as fresh an operatic critic as ever, contributed, but no matter what the title of the periodical might have been, there was invariably a corner kept in it for the most utterly lunatic contributions ever penned by mortal man. The humour was cryptic, to be appreciated only by those initiated into the inner circle of Davisonry. Jimmy Davison enjoyed this nonsense amazingly. He was so serious as a musician and as a musical critic that to burst out into utter nonsensical rhymes or prose was a positive relief to him. In these wild absurdities he "let himself go," but never so far that he could not control his Hanwellian inspiration. After Davison's death this eccentric paper perished, as Sutherland Edwards tells me, "through an insane attempt made to carry it on as a rational journal."

Davison dates the one letter I happen to have preserved from the "*Eel and Butler*"—August 4, Shelley's birthday," and in it he rambles on about Arthur Sullivan, Christine Nilsson, and "H. Baron C. Mouton de Kenni," which was his facetious way of writing "Charles Lamb Kenny," and he quotes "poor Mad. Dülcken" (thus abbreviating Madame Dülcken, and unfortunately depriving her of her "*âme*") as being accustomed to say "*J'aimais esprit*";—but the rest of this letter is an impenetrable mystery, as there is no witty saying, no humorous story in it from beginning to end ; though, *réflexion faite*, this omission would have been, accord-

ing to the eccentric Jimmy, "just where the fun came in."

Jimmy Davison was a great admirer of both Arthur Sullivan and of his friend and *co-aegualis* Fred Clay. Ernest Clay Ker Seymer was Fred's eldest brother. Ernest and his wife were of all our hospitable compatriots in Paris the most hospitable. What delightful days and evenings have I not spent with them in the rooms in the Champs Elysées! Afterwards the Clay Ker Seymers had a place in Leicestershire, and I am far from certain that they did not for a while rent a property in Sussex famous for its ghostly coach and horses, which could be heard coming up the drive at midnight, a sure sign of woe to the hereditary owners. Arthur Sullivan, Fred Clay, and myself were almost inseparable at this date, which is now prehistoric.

By the merest accident I have come across a letter from Arthur Sullivan, written long before he had made a name for himself, prior even to the days of *Cox and Box*, when he and his mother lived in Claverton Terrace, St. George's Road, within ten minutes' walk of my house in Belgrave Road, and while he still held the appointment of organist at the church (near Wilton Place I think it was, but its locality and name I cannot call to mind), and had not relinquished playing the organ in the *Prophète*, *Faust*, and other operas, behind the scenes, at Covent Garden. He, too, had a pleasant way of dropping into draw-

ings in a letter, and his last reference was to the latest addition to *la famille Burnand* at that time, some thirty-seven years ago. This letter is in the Appendix.

A propos of Arthur's mother, who was a most amusing old lady, and as devoted to her elder son as was he to her—for there never could have been a better son than was Arthur to his mother—I remember his telling me an amusing anecdote. The Duke of Edinburgh, to whom Arthur had been introduced, was, as most of us remember, an enthusiastic musician, and frequently, for quiet practice on the violin, he would drop into Arthur Sullivan's in the most informal way. On such occasions old Mrs. Sullivan would treat H.R.H. just "as one of the family," and would no more "fash herself" concerning his exalted rank, than if she had been in utter ignorance of it.

One afternoon when the Duke and Arthur, having finished their duet, were sitting down to a homely "dish o' tea" provided by Mrs. Sullivan, it suddenly occurred to her to start the subject of family names and titles, which puzzled the good lady considerably.

"Sir," she said, "your family name is Guelph?"

"My dear mother"—began Arthur remonstrating.

"But it is, isn't it?" she persisted.

"Certainly," replied the Duke, much amused.
"What's the matter with it, Mrs. Sullivan?"

"Oh, nothing," returned the excellent old lady musingly, "only I can't understand why you don't call yourself by your proper name."

Arthur wanted to explain to her, but the Duke would not allow him.

"There's nothing to be ashamed of in the name of 'Guelph,' Mrs. Sullivan," he said gravely.

"That's exactly what I say," persisted Arthur's mother, "nothing whatever as far as *I* know. And that being so, why you should not call yourself by it I can't understand."

Arthur had it out with her afterwards, but for a long time she held to it that "Guelf or Guelph," whichever they liked, ought to be the surname of all the members of the Royal Family.

Fred Sullivan, Arthur's brother, was one of the most naturally comic little men I ever came across. He, too, was a first-rate practical musician, and Arthur always found him employment in any orchestra that he had to conduct. As he was the most absurd person, so was he the very kindest. The brothers were devoted to each other, but Arthur went up, and poor little Fred went under.

The godfathers and godmothers of Arthur Sullivan were much to be blamed. At his christening they bestowed on the future composer

the *prénoms* of "Arthur Seymour," utterly forgetting that his surname began with an "S." Therefore it so happened that never, when he arrived at years of discretion, could "Arthur Seymour Sullivan" sign his initials in full. Unfortunate. But sponsors at the font should be very careful.

The letter I give at the end has a melancholy interest for all who remember handsome, gay, *toujours débonnaire* Shirley Brooks. It was written just one week before he died. There is no sign of failing in the hand or in the humour. He was a first-rate correspondent, and to him letter-writing was in reality a recreation, as it was to Augustus Sala, though, of course, neither would admit the fact.

I have mentioned Edmund (or Edward) Laman Blanchard. It appears from this letter in my possession that he was getting up, or had had arranged for him, a benefit performance in which, with W. S. Gilbert, H. J. Byron, and others, I had been asked to take part and to appear on the stage in a club scene with several other dramatists and journalists. I suppose it came off and that it proved a "bumper" for the *bénéficiaire*, who was known as "the hero of a hundred pantomimes," all, as I believe, at Drury Lane. He belonged to the very old Bohemian state of things that in my time was rapidly ceasing to be. Blanchard was kindness personified, ever ready to lend a helping hand, and to give encouragement

to a youthful "commencing" writer, dramatist or journalist.

While examining the packets of letters that have accumulated during over a quarter of a century I find one from Henry J. Byron dated Southern Lodge, Buxton, December 1877, wherein he tells me that only a "beastly rheumatism" has prevented him from going out, and he congratulates me on the "admirable notion of utilising Skelt." The piece he alludes to is *The Red Rover*, played at the Strand, all the characters being got up after the old-fashioned "penny plain, twopence coloured" printed figures sold in sheets and known as "Skelt's Scenes and Characters," now rather difficult to obtain; even at that time their popularity was just on the wane, as was that of the old toy theatre for "the nursery stage of the drama." So H. J. Byron, the perpetual punster of genuinely original wit, finishes a letter without a single pun in it!! And this it is, as it appears to me, that makes this letter of his absolutely unique.

From H. J. Byron to George Meredith, from the witty writer of burlesque to the satirical novelist and trenchant writer of "English as she is writ" by George, may seem a considerable leap. Yet in my earliest literary recollections these two are associated. When I was staying with Maurice Fitzgerald and George Meredith, "in the beginning," as already narrated in these veracious chronicles, at Esher, I had just come from hearing the new burlesque *The Lady*

of Lyons at the Strand Theatre, written by Henry J. Byron, and one of the songs had got hold of me so fast that I found myself constantly humming the tune and singing a verse or two. During our country walks, and in the quiet evenings, George Meredith would "call" for this song, and I used to comply with the request by giving, as I fear, a rather maimed version of it. What, however, used to delight George was the "swing and go" of it, and the catch of the rhythm. It was sung, through his nose, by Clarke as *Beauseant*, and ran thus:

"I've hit on a trick they can't see through, not were they Argus-eyed, Oh !

As soon as possib^l Miss Deschapelles shall be my bride, Oh !"

And the lilt of this to some old American jingle called "*Skid-a-ma-lik*" used to take George Meredith's fancy. I should doubt whether at any time George Meredith cared much for the drama, that is the stage representation of it, even in its highest comedy or its deepest tragedy, while as for farce and burlesque I should not be very much surprised to learn that he had never seen either one or the other. As, however, he is on the spot, and a very charming rustic spot it is too, to contradict any statement I may make "in error," he has three courses open to him—to corroborate, to deny, or to say nothing at all about it.

I reproduce a characteristic letter from George, ever kindly. To come upon these letters is like

meeting a dear old friend unexpectedly. It is the dear old friend's hand, and I grasp it heartily.

I have a few of George Augustus Sala's letters, all in his small copperplate kind of writing. I remember calling on him when he lived in Brunswick Square and finding him at work in his study. He showed me the books of reference which he had compiled himself, consisting of folios of newspaper cuttings, concerning men and things, alphabetically arranged. Only once before had I seen anything like the method and order of his compilation, and that was in ledgers of reference kept by Charles Reade the novelist, who, whenever he came across any notable event in print, any anecdote, or indeed any information that might at some time or other serve his purpose, acted on Cap'en Cuttle's motto of "when found, make a note of," and then and there book'd and folio'd it for future use.

Sala's letter to me is an eccentric jingle, and dated "Reform Club: Pall Mall, Wednesday, fifth April" (year omitted), runs thus, in Hudibrastic fashion:—

"'Tis most courteous, Mister Burnand
I should very much like to see your hand,
'S witty and cunning work, in the Grand
New 'xtravaganza which you've planned
(Tho' I'm fain to confess I don't understand
Much about theatres) *n'impor'te*; and
If you'll send the pasteboard by post or hand
Mrs. G. A. S. shall bring her hus-band,
And I'm sure Miss Wilton's house will be crammed.
P.S. And I hope Piritheüs won't be dammed."

His wish was granted, as *Pirithous*, though not within measurable distance of the unexampled run of *Ixion*, did very well. That George A. Sala did not know much about theatres at this time is shown by his calling the Royalty "Miss Wilton's House." Marie Wilton (Lady Bancroft) never had anything to do with the Royalty Theatre, as, after quitting the little Strand Theatre, she had achieved great success, and, indeed, had fairly commenced the making of the name and reputation of the Prince of Wales's Theatre, the "little house off Tottenham Court Road," before *Pirithous* was brought out by Mrs. Selby at the Royalty, 13th April 1865. It was about this time, 1865–66, that the Bancrofts renounced burlesque, the last in which Lady Bancroft (Miss Marie Wilton) appeared being *Little Don Giovanni*, by H. J. Byron, when that excellent comedian John Hare, admirable impersonator of certain types of elderly and old men, played the part of *Zerlina*, "a simple peasant girl." This was the last of the burlesques at the Prince of Wales's Theatre.

In the course of my researches I have come across a very characteristic letter from Dion Boucicault. He had years before this had a quarrel with the Dramatic Authors' Society, and he had not been altogether in the right: nor had the Society. Of this difficulty between authors and the Society I, being quite a novice, knew nothing, except by the tradition of the elders. However, easy-going as I

was, even I had become dissatisfied with the state of business as done by the Dramatic Authors' Society. Prices were going up; fees were increasing; and Mr. Dion Boucicault was getting for one successful piece more in two weeks than any one of the old stagers had been accustomed to make in two years.

I liked Dion; he not only amused me with his stories and his wit, but he elicited my admiration for his business capacity. For a dramatic author to really "make money" was, when I began (not to make money, but to write in order to try and do so), a thing unheard of. He could just manage to exist by his trade; that was all. Planché, the Broughs, Dance, Talfourd, Tom Taylor, Stirling Coyne, and all of the dramatists of that day had a hand-to-mouth existence as far as the stage brought any contribution towards their incomes. Except Tom Taylor and Planché, they were none of them in what is known as "society," and therefore the calls on their pocket were not extravagant.

The plan was, in London, for a manager to pay so much for a piece (a hundred pounds per act was the very highest sum given), and then, in the provinces, the theatres were rated at various prices. About five shillings per night for a one-act farce may be stated as an average sum. Boucicault upset all this, and those dramatists who came after him, and who acted upon his plan, reaped the benefit of his daring innovation.

Boucicault was a diamond who cut a diamond, and where there had been any attempt to "Jew" him, he took the very first opportunity of showing how, where two could play at that game, only *one* could be successful, and that one would be himself.

He had gone into the Adelphi Theatre with that admirably constructed and cleverly written drama, the *Colleen Bawn*, which had previously been refused a home at two or three theatres, and Ben Webster had grudgingly settled to give him a comparatively small salary per week for himself, his wife, and the drama. When the piece proved an unheard-of success, being the first in the West End of London of all dramas with a "sensation scene," Ben Webster shook hands with himself on having made so clever a bargain. Unfortunately, he did not in a generous mood offer to make a handsome increase to the bird that laid the golden eggs. The bird, commonly thought to be a goose, was as wise and as artful as a raven. One Saturday evening, early in the run of the piece, the news was brought to Ben Webster that Boucicault and his wife were both invalidated; impossible for them to appear. The engagement did not permit of anyone being substituted in their parts—in fact, the engagement was terminable probably at a fortnight's notice, or a month's; and without Boucicault and his wife where would be the piece? Ben Webster foresaw the collapse of the Adelphi *problem*. He saw at once

that the illness, which was *nullis medicabilis herbis*, would yield to open-handed treatment. Would Boucicault name his terms? Ah! that was business. Certainly; an agreement to be drawn up at once, to the effect that Dion and wife were to have so much as salary, and he, as author, was to have a share in the profits which his work was bringing in, "a share after expenses"—which expenses Dion carefully limited to a certain fixed figure per night—and Myles-na-Coppaleen with the Colleen Bawn would be themselves again, playing that very night to the crowded house. No sooner said and written than signed, sealed, and delivered; most wisely on the part of Ben Webster, who, not playing in the piece himself, could now take a long holiday while placing to his account funds enough to carry him over any losses for the next three years.

I have not got the date of a letter written to me by Ben Webster, but it seems that I must have acted on the Boucicaultian advice, and that before producing a piece at the Olympic I must have proposed such terms as Ben Webster was becoming accustomed to since the Boucicaultian treatment. Ben Webster simply says: "My Dear Burnand,—The Olympic Theatre holds a hundred and thirty pounds, but there has been a hundred and seventy-three in it.—Yours ever, etc."

It is curt and limited strictly to business. To what piece it referred I do not remember. The

price of seats in those days was much lower than now; and the Olympic (were it in existence nowadays) at present prices would hold something like £230 instead of £173 at its full complement.

In his very neat and ladylike hand, very characteristic of the *suave* old writer (for he was old when I first knew him), we have a specimen of the ever-polite and ever-pleasant Sir Julius Benedict. I wrote, or rather, adapted from the French, two *Helens*, one for the Alhambra and the other for the Adelphi. Of the latter, the date is 1866, and perhaps Sir Julius's letter may apply to this. In the cast of the piece was included the veteran Paul Bedford as *Calchas*, Mrs. A. Mellon (Miss Woolgar) as *Paris*, J. L. Toole as *Menelaus*, and the fascinating little Miss Furtado as *Helen*. My *Helen* at the Alhambra came out seven years later, in 1873, when Miss Rose Belle, as *Paris*, divided the attractiveness of the principals in the cast with Miss Kate Santley as *Helène*, and Mr. Harry Paulton as the comic representative of *Menelaus*.

It is amusing to learn from a note in the published book of the opera at the Alhambra that the duet in the second act, between Paris and Helen, was "cut short by an order from the Lord Chamberlain's office, the whole duet having been previously excised when the original opera in French was performed at the St. James's, with Madame Schneider as *La Belle Helène*." I do remember Madame Schneider, as clever as she

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was handsome, in this character, and her performance of it was uncommonly *risqué*, but she was justified by the character of the part and of such a song as "*Ah belle Vénus quel plaisir trouves tu,*" which most of my readers, who may remember the opera, will call to mind as something *un peu fort*.

I give at the end a *bonne bouche*. It is not dated, but there is no sort of difficulty in placing it. Fred. Walker, the artist, had designed a "cut" for the theatre envelope, which was subsequently used as a poster on the hoardings all over town and country. I had designed a ring in gold with black enamel and inscription in blue, examples of which had been presented on the hundredth or two hundredth night, I forget which, to the principal members of the company. Probably in some letter to Miss Marie Wilton (now Lady Bancroft) I had told her of these dark designs, or rather black and blue designs. And her very happy reply is in the letter reproduced.

To my letter requesting permission to print in this facsimile the amusing letter, Lady Bancroft, with that *esprit* that invariably characterises her sayings and doings, replied :—

“*May 25.*

“DEAR SIR FRANK,—I remember how we were playing ‘Caste.’ At the time it was a bit of a joke from Polly Eccles, and I am glad you thought well enough of it to keep it. My writing was not so bold

as it is now, but then, perhaps, I was not such a bold person.—Yours ever, MARIE EFFIE BANCROFT."

The original Polly Eccles is the same as ever—
inimitable!

•
And now there is space for "no more at present from yours truly." The overflow must wait. Who, except the most accomplished and thoroughly practised orator, that has been called upon to make a speech, has not, after his oration is a thing of the past, remembered a hundred things that he had omitted, and has not seen clearly all the brilliant hits that he might have made, and the sparkling epigrams that ought to have occurred to him but didn't? Such is, to a certain extent, my case. I look at my notes and I see there *memoranda* sufficient to fill volumes. I meet old friends and they remind me of places, persons, circumstances, and groups of stories, all well worth the telling.

But "here break we off." Should these reminiscences fail to interest some and to beguile the leisure of others, then I apologise,—"my fault, ladies and gentlemen." But, if they serve their turn and suffice for interest and amusement, my object is gained, and adding that, on demand, "there is plenty more where this has come from," I "humbly take my leave," and am everybody's most obedient servant.

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|--|--|

**ARCHBISHOP'S HOUSE,
WESTMINSTER,**

S.W.

Feb 19. 1889

My dear Mr. Burnand,

I will write straight to Mgr
Stonar in Rome (27 Vic Sistina)
as well as ask him to do all in
his power for you.

I send you two of my cards
one for him, one for M^r Della
Volpe the Pope's Master of the
Camera.

It gives me much pleasure to
see my son to you. or Mrs
Burnand. Behave always

Very truly yours
Henry E. Cardew

1100 AM



Rochdale

June 23. 86

Dear Mr. Burnand.

Mr. Miller has often written
to me on political questions. He is
a great writer of letters. Let I think
nothing I have written to him can
be of such consequence that he should
trouble you about it.

I advise you not to give yourself
any anxiety about any letter I
write.

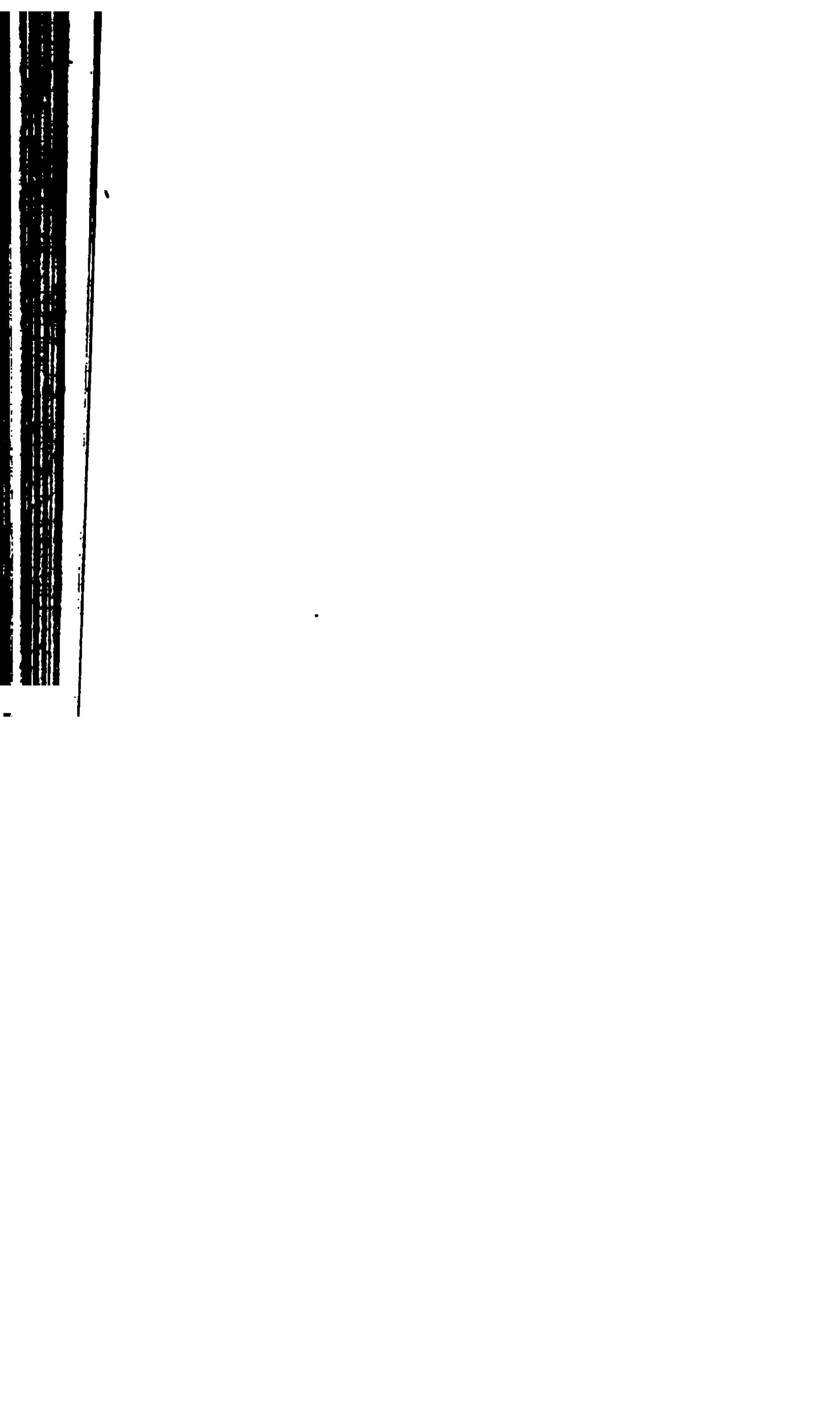
Yours very truly

John Bright.

F. C. Burnand Esq

192 Brompton Road
London SW

John W.



New Grove House.

Hampstead Heath.

Dear Frank,

I have written to Quiller
to let him know all we, as I
should not like to be thought
much absent represented unless
vol. The sum is that I have
done a large drawing (too big
for French or any other place!)

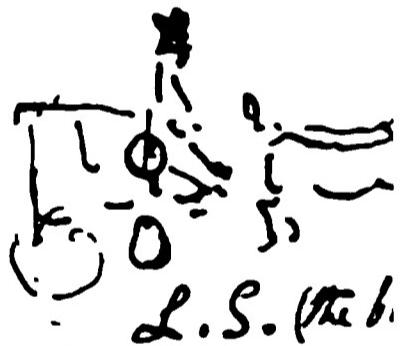
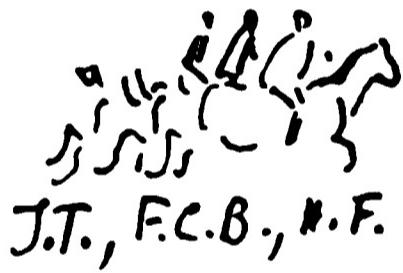
The 7th & 8th going on Saturday
I have - that's all right.

If it isn't east hopping on Wednesday
I shall have done with you -
and Wednesday was my pick

Yours truly

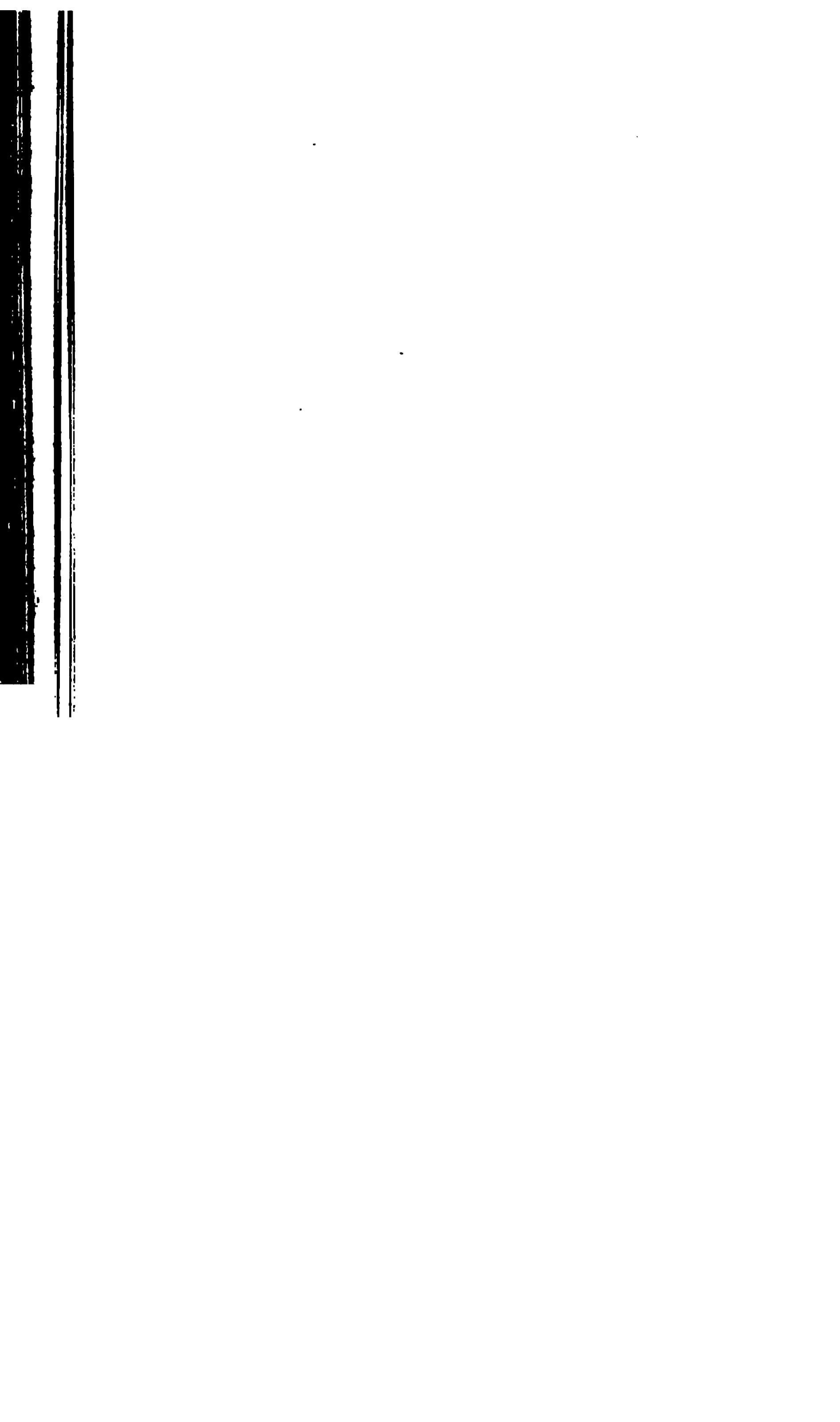
Why doesn't my rehuter reek
Stop & have a chat when on
a blue moon he happens to
ride past my door?

None will let. Going to
snatch aerofiles at Eastbourne
I think. Eastbourne has
never been done in. French



"Real Dye", by Victor Malet
a charming & witty & theatrical
Story

Young
Sutherland



Just read Trouder's case! Steaming.

New Grove House,

Hampstead Heath.
I know

Dear Frank
Coud't go yesterday - struggled
with almanac.

Would you let me have back
May No^o? ~~that would be in June~~
~~the time of year is right~~ and would
you send me a line telling me how
W.B. is? very sorry about his wife.



Did you read the article on Herky?

M. Noh

annetators ambo!



Sunday

At the Grove House,
Hampstead Heath.



Aunt is now carcaterinatore!

Dear Frank,

You know our aunt or annetator about the well who comes in late to dinner (that you sent): I'm just reprob to say, that if you think it would do better for aunt (I think it will), as also to the place of mine father "a child of the period" or "there were decent, and might be made to do duty for the number, compescus? above, arraig!

11/11/1878

Dont pay it to have pulls of my
drawings sent to you, wait at our
bureau (there's a good boy), I think
of our very urgent and conservative
about prints, but more deeply -
C. G. en vant la peine -

Yester

Ld. M.

Punch Office, 85, Fleet Street.

Jan 25 186

Dear H.H.

You have forced
me to accept
your suggestion about
giving you yr head
I am very unwilling
to go home - the office
will be open on Saturday,

Yours
H.H.



Friday night



I rec'd y
Tuesday, & did
should be able to
affirmative. as
of Town nest as
unfortunately, you
Sunday (in fact)
which cut it by
coming to you,
already engaged

Yours
Arthur J. Bellmore

25
JL

and shone) like no one I ever saw.

Although, I must tell you that
I can never enjoy your presence so
profoundly on Sunday as my Prime

Service is not over much I "parted"

and I cannot get off it. That's thinking in the wrong

I hope Mrs. Brown is going
to see Otto this



dog 10'. Feb

0.M

4

6, Kent Terrace,
Regent's Park.
N.W.

† Skunk died ^{one week}
after this
Monday 23 Feb.
at 1 P.M. 30 m.

as Frank,
Costume, a pair of breeches, hat
& pulled up & fastened, a plaid
cap, a light shawl, & a big
a guillot. Coat, Easy chair by fire in
a room. Stole of mine — offensive. Not
body, legs rather swollen, innocent
orf, & touch of haemorrhoids. Liver,
swelled all day, a glass of beer
& dinner. Liver not forbidden, which
means, because I don't care about
in the least. Lethargic, said few?
But I think — I say I think, but I
it have been that work of this sort of thing,



3

don't trouble about thinking of
coming to see me. In fact, the
Doctors would rather I don't worry,
as talking makes me cough, so I
haven't scarcely anybody except a lady
or two who do not expect answers
to what they say. When our
throats are clear, we'll have it
out. But I will not know about
myself, & I shall be more than
glad to hear the you are recovering
written on a bottle, till I know
if my you can read it
in time 

(2)

if I could kindly beg you six weeks from now let you tell me of. It is most welcome & time when all one fancies so well. That you are young, & have time for a longer Ventures. I fancy too let you could put it more lighter, if you went to bed a little later & a great deal straighter. You I fear make you growing a jolly one, but of my other system — "obey the Queen Richard & then to Edward!"

Point. What was said to lead you away

from dear Alice. I am indeed grieved to hear about that. You don't want for what made with such a thing; something Natural, give the women a taste of underlying tenderness — and it does away with the crown.

Yours affec

Southern Lodge.
St. Leon's Road.
-31st -1877] Brighton.

Dear Burnand:

I am only waiting for
the departure of a boat of
information, which comes
once in three days, to
see the New Poor
as an admirable

is played out;
Gails Hammer
of the first order
Please anybody.
I sincerely con-
gratulate you
with all good.

J. C. Burroughs

Wm. H.

a dull Burlesque
was and parodies
the cause to

write you on
successes and
remain,
Yours sincerely,
W^r. J. Byron.

action to William Bell

The opening address is
admirable too. The real
fact is that ^{aspects of} fashion in
theatrical matters are
greatly magnified by critics
anything with the populara-
tion in it will succeed. I am certa-
nly now the critics have
warped about with the
entoments' regarding Bush
and their Boroffe is lost.
One condemned one day
other executed the next.
a bad opera B. fail. The at-

Wm 10/11

Boxhill, Dorking,

June 16th 1876

Dear Frank,

Downs ←

right & left;

grass rises for miles.

Capital for cock horses.

On in a minutes,

only down is the wind

when you say off.

Distances from town

{ } miles (stadii 47).

"
" Gay Downs by Putney,

Wimbledon, then east

South. I cross flat &

twice, over hedges

of Epsom Racecourse,

with Headley Church
in view - an oak,

& then turn sharp to

right, a bit real cheap

had got a slap & don
"longur of ^{Gang} indignancy,
a very Briton: so
down Agadley came
South - westward: then
in Micklesham Vale
sharp & left, a 'twre
with indigible burn
stuck in rib & Wrah
wreath disth: - You
are at Box Hill; 24
paces up on left a
flint cottage: there lives

with her goodness any one
who says, You are the most
(very queer girl) she
"less. High by road, but
a fine L. a. Greek, a
Chalish, where your friend
at home may say, leave

$1\frac{1}{2}$ Dm : dinner $6\frac{1}{2}$:

but later,

Coppenrath.

Reform club, Pall Mall. Monday fifth April

To; most courteous Mr Burnand

I should very much like to see your hand -
So witty andunning wot, in the grand
New Extravaganza which you've plann'd
(tho' I'm few to confis I don't understand
much about Theatres) import; and
if you'll send ~~you~~ the partboard by post or hand
Mrs G. A. S. shall bring her ~~good~~ husband
and I'm sure Mr Weston's house will be crammed.

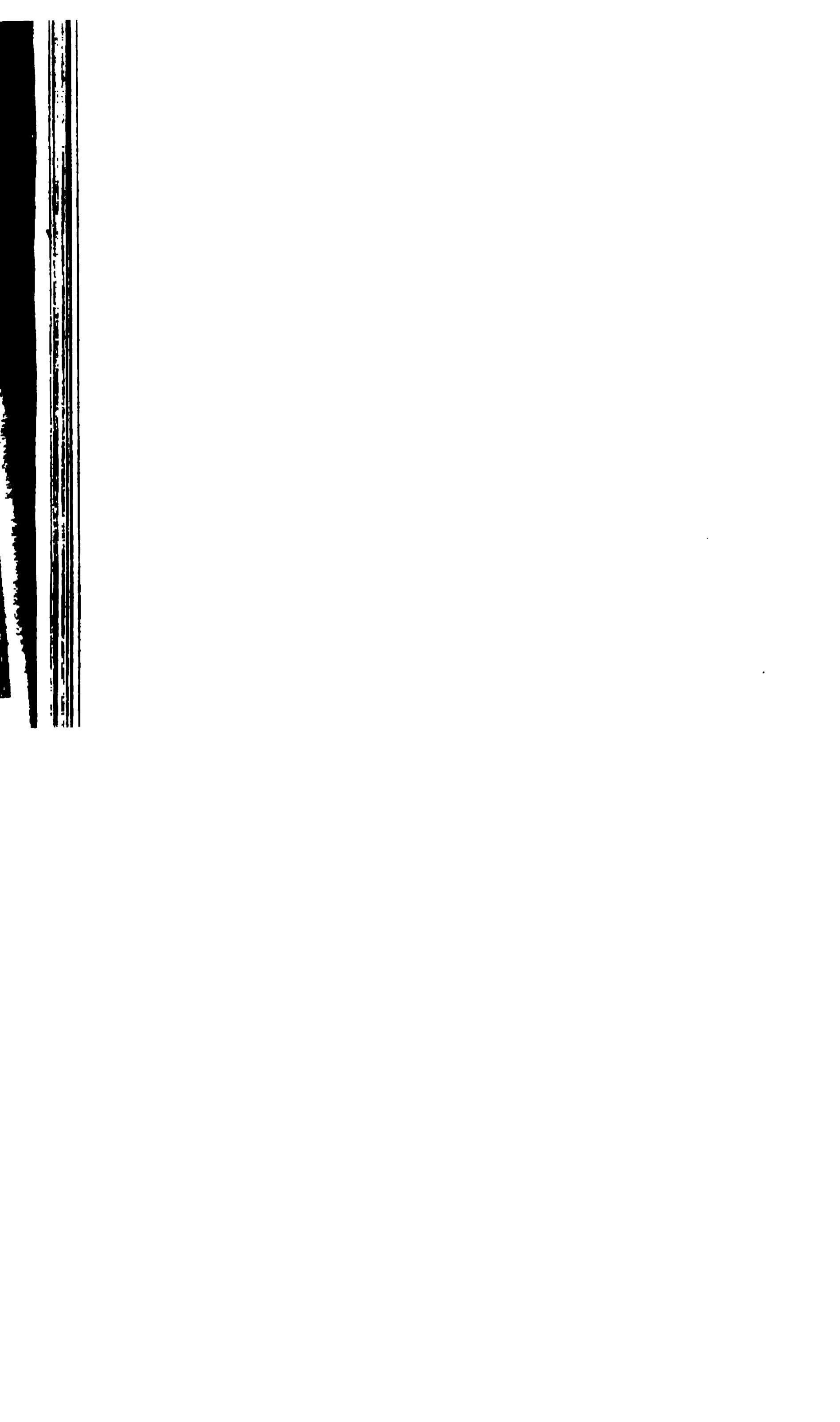
P.S. and I hope Smithson won't be damned.

Faithfully yours always

George: Aug: Sala.

2600 at 64. Guilford st. Russell Square. W.C.

J. C. Burnand Esq;

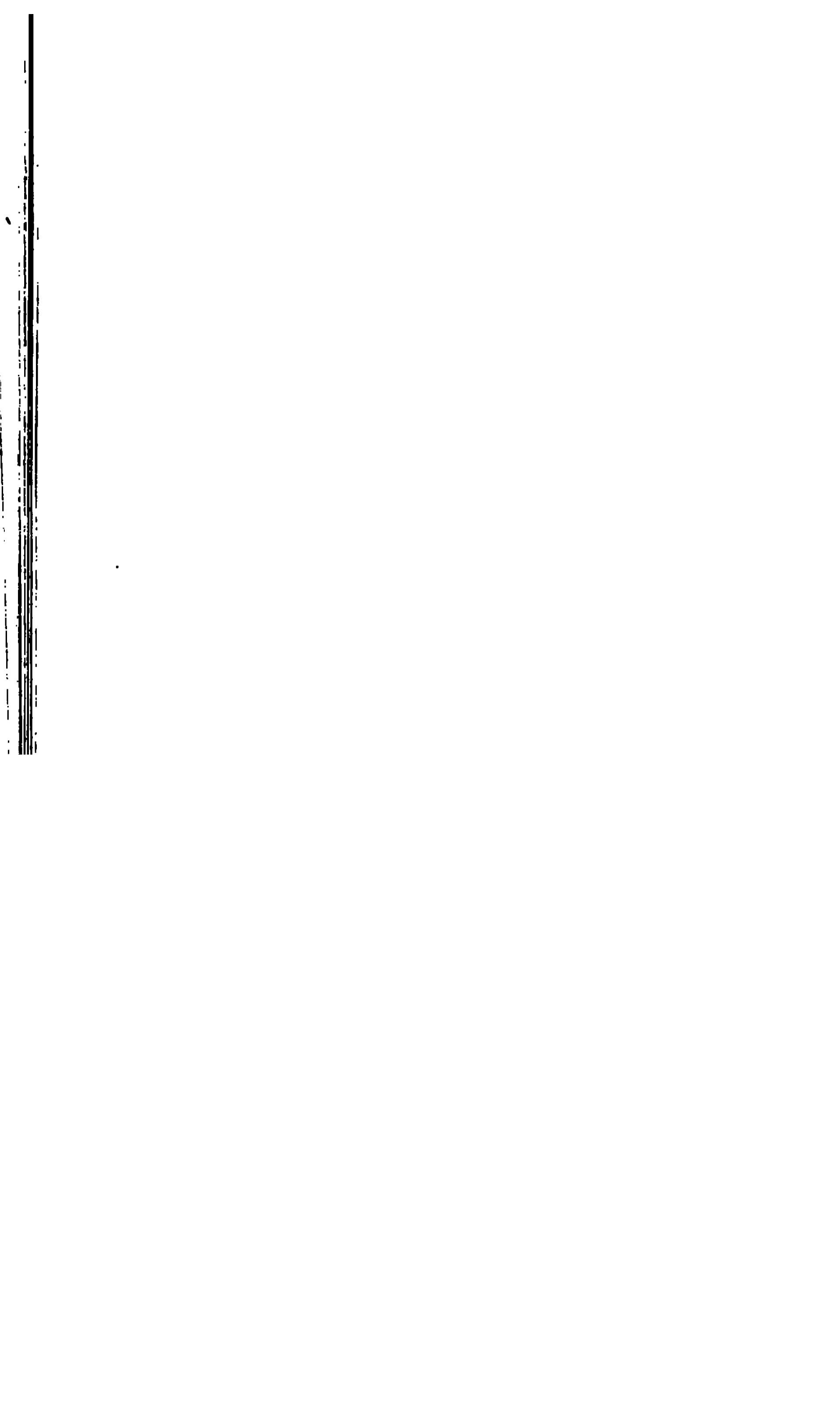


and ~~J~~

in ~~way~~
~~111~~

possibly

- Wilson



May 25

from Sam Steele

I remember his

Grand-Dad's name

Pliny C. Steele

The late Mr.

it has to fit in

the same place

as his father

W.M.

you thought
you had
got it to keep it.
My brother has got
it back as it is now
for the new Johnson's
was just bought by
Lock Johnson.

Y.B. Gandy
Andrews Office Manager

11. 30. pm

18. Staff. I am.

W

Dear Frank.

We shall be delighted
to come. Visit Stanley?
at 7. 30. sharp.

Yours,

Lily Tomlinson.

Tomorrow. Thurs.

I'm summoned on a
special duty for the
28th no. shan't go.

. 20. Feb'y 73.

U.S.M.

Dear Samm,

Here is your own
suggestion for
Mr Stanley De-

· caption

Yestur
FEB

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